

The New Birth.

A Sermon by

REV. D. MacLEAN,

Truro, Nova Scotia.

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God." John 3; 3.**

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PREFACE.

My object in publishing this sermon is to be of some service to those who are strangers to the *New Birth*. I have endeavored to show the dangerous state of the natural man, the necessity of the New Birth, its nature and blessings, etc. The marks of this great change, which I have given, may be helpful to those who, though born again, are still doubtful whether that great change has taken place.

The aim of every saved sinner ought to be to do good in the world, and be, with God's help, the means of saving others. This is the noblest work on earth.

I have, though with feelings of delicacy, given my own experience of this blessed change ; but not very minutely, however, sincerely hoping that it will benefit some one.

The appeal to the UNSAVED is made with the view of moving the graceless to seek salvation at once.

Beloved reader, study this great subject carefully and prayerfully ; and may you, through Christ, obtain the joy, and the peace, and the blessedness of those who have passed from death unto life ; whose sins are covered ; who have been born of the WATER and of the SPIRIT.

The verses are but supplemental.

MUST BE BORN AGAIN.

A ruler named Nicodemus
Came alone by night to Jesus,
And sought with kind words to please Him ;
His own mind was all on learning.

Your miracles must be divine
He said, for none were e'er like thine ;
A teacher from God you must be,
And that we surely all do see.

Christ said " You must be born again
If Heaven you would then attain ;
You must be cleansed from guilt and sin,
And made a living soul within."

Nicodemus felt not his guilt,
Though on the sand his house was built ;
He trusted in self-righteousness,
And thought that all like him were blest.

Many are still in the same way,
Living in sin from day to day ;
The living God they do not know,
Nor think at all where they do go.

Think now, my friend, of your sad case,
And seek for mercy through Christ's grace.
Apply to Him without delay,
For time is passing fast away.

Your body is but mortal clay,
And soon will into dust decay ;
You are a flower of the field
Which none can from destruction shield.

Christ Jesus offers life today
To such as will His word obey ;
Oh, take it, friend, and do not wait,
For fear you'll ask when 'tis too late.

Heaven is a prepared place
 For such as will receive God's grace ;
 For such as will now live by faith
 And walk in wisdom's happy way.

Many are in the lowest pit
 Who thought for Heaven they were fit ;
 Who at Communion table sat,
 And drew their faces long and sad.

But God they did not love at all ;
 On Him in truth they did not call ;
 Their hearts upon the world were set,
 And with its vanities were fed.

Some their salvation did neglect ;
 Their need of mercy never felt.
 These were once the fair and the gay
 That would go on in their own way.

The pleasures of the world they sought,
 With its enticements they were caught ;
 They followed the ways of sin,
 And with the giddy crowd were seen.

At last came poverty and shame,
 As well as a disgraced name ;
 The day of mercy has gone by,
 In darkness and despair they die.

They would not at all be advised,
 God's counsels wise they once despised ;
 They thought not of the day of death,
 Nor of their sad eternal state.

Regrets after death will not heal ;
 Upon the dead there is a seal ;
 Once there they may forever weep
 And at Jehovah nash their teeth.

Many are now in the lowest Hell
 Who tried the way to Heaven tell ;
 They were blind leaders of the blind,
 Who the way to Heaven couldn't find.

Others to Heaven they would lead,
 But the way could not themselves see ;
 They would the way to others teach,
 But they both fall into the ditch.

The Scribes and Pharisees of old
 Were to the poor and needy cold ;
 Looked at them with high disdain,
 And to speak to them would not deign.

Scribes and Pharisees of our day
 Are no way better than were they ;
 Their sins are of the selfsame dye,
 And their profession but a lie.

None can believe what they will say ;
 They've a face for every day ;
 One when in the pew they will sit,
 Another when they walk the street.

One in their own house they wear,
 Another to their business take ;
 They're every way double men,
 With no stability in them.

The sinful heart is all the same,
 In every clime and every age ;
 'Tis full of coldness and deceit,
 And none is able to know it.

Hypocrites do much to deceive,
 That they may benefit receive ;
 They have a lying bitter tongue.
 With which they do the godly wrong.

They would have the eternal prize,
 But to obtain it would not strive ;
 The way of holiness despised,
 And Christ Himself they criticised.

Their fleshly lusts would not deny,
 Nor any sin would mortify.
 Their sins they loved with all their heart,
 And never would from them depart.

Oh, sinner, be advised in time,
 When full salvation may be thine :
 While Jesus offers mercy still,
 To Him take all your sin and guilt.

The blood of Christ your soul will clean,
 And make you purer than the sun ;
 Will make you whiter than the snow,
 And ever you'll rejoicing go.

With death you'll soon be face to face,
 Which comes to all the human race ;
 None can long in this vain world stay,
 But quickly from it hastes away.

How sad for all who have no grace !
 When at the end of their brief race,
 They find they have no help from God,
 Nor any comfort in His word.

These did not His salvation seek,
 Nor would the Gospel warning heed ;
 They were not troubled for their sin,
 And of the godly oft made fun.

They their salvation did put off,
 And at the righteous did scoff.
 They said there is yet time enough,
 And by and bye we'll hear your stuff.

Now, man, is the accepted time
 When full salvation you may find.
 Receive Christ, then, with friendly kiss,
 Lest you the way to Heaven miss.

The Spirit grieve not then away,
 While He would with you still remain ;
 Cherish impressions He now makes,
 And pray that deeper they be made.

Pray they may end in the New Birth,
 And fill your soul with peace and light.
 Then you shall ever happy be,
 And escape lasting misery.

Ere you knock when He hears no more,
 When closed forever is the door,
 When mercy from the Lord you beg ;
 But mercy then you cannot get.

You will forthwith be sent to hell,
 Where with the devil you must dwell.
 The spirits there will mock your pains
 And you'll be kept in darkness chains.

You must then live in burning fire,
 Where the worms never, never die,
 Where water shall not cool your tongue,
 And blasphemy shall be your song.

Many would like with Christ to dwell,
 Who 'gainst Him on the earth rebel.
 They would be in Heaven above,
 But here the Saviour will not love.

Many would hell and pain escape,
 But still the way to Heaven hate ;
 They would go there with all their sin,
 If they could only enter in.

If with Christ you would have a part,
 You must by grace get a new heart ;
 Your heart must all be made anew,
 And a right spirit put in you.

If Heaven's glories you would see,
 You must from sin converted be ;
 You must here walk the narrow way
 That leads to the eternal day.

All who the Saviour here believe
 Will everlasting life receive ;
 Will triumph over sin and death,
 And enter through the pearly gate.

They'll walk upon the golden street,
 And their loved ones there will greet ;
 They will not part forever more,
 Nor cease the God-head to adore.

All that here on the Lord believe,
Shall into Heaven be received,
Shall see the glory of His place,
And ever with Him there rejoice.

Think whether you are now prepared
To enter an abode so fair,
And sing the song of the redeemed,
Who are from sin and sorrow freed.

The many mansioned house is there :
It stands for all who are prepared,
Who at the straight gate entrance had,
And are in proper garment clad.

Let all who have hope for Heaven
Forgive as they'd be forgiven ;
Do to men, by the golden rule,
As you would they should do to you.

Lead then an inoffensive life ;
Such as will bear the clearest light,
That none against you sin can prove,
What time they wish you to accuse.

Let then the Bible be our rule,
In all we say, and think, and do ;
Until our labors here are done,
When Jesus comes and takes us home.

The New Birth.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." John III, 3.

This is a great subject. There can indeed be no greater, for it concerns the whole human race. Everlasting blessedness is connected therewith. But while it is of vast importance to all men, it is more especially so to the unpardoned sinner. Those who have been "born again" must go on "growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord." They will never forget the blessed change of the New Birth, but will always look back with pleasure to the time when it took place. But it is not the New Birth that troubles them most now, for it is past. The struggle now is to lead a pure and holy life, and be found at last prepared to enter into the joy of the Lord."

To this class belong those who were "born again" when very young, and do not know the time when a change of heart took place. So far as known, this class does not seem to be very large in our day, nor do we learn that it was large at any time. (This does not refer to children dying in infancy).

But to the unpardoned sinner the New Birth is the first of all questions. Why? Because without it he cannot be saved. There is no salvation except by this change. No one can get to Heaven unless he is *born again*. Nor can he by any means get unto God's favor. The wrath of God abideth on him; and he must at last go to dwell forever with the devil and his angels. It is then wise to study the New Birth, and try to understand what it is, and get it with all its blessings, too. When one is greatly in need of anything, it is of great advantage for him to know *where* and *how* it may be got. God gave us reason and understanding to employ them. We are accountable to God for our talents, and ought therefore to employ them wisely. Think of the earnestness with which the scholar studies his lessons, the business man the probability of gain and loss in all his business transactions, and the farmer the time to sow and reap. * * * It is said of a certain astronomer that he studied one subject for seventeen years; and success at last crowned his efforts. If men employ their talents in gaining knowledge, improving their minds, and securing the meat which perisheth, why not employ the same talents in studying the word of God and seeking salvation for their souls. Surely it is worth while to spend time and labor seeking everlasting life. "Labor not for

the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you." John 6:27. The Bible was given us to study and learn from it. God will hold us responsible for the talents He gave us, whether they be five or one. Although man cannot by reading and studying clearly understand the New Birth, yet he can learn much about it. When studying the word of God sincerely good impressions are made, and these are deepened, and end often in the regeneration of the soul.

The conversation between Christ and Nicodemus is highly interesting. Nicodemus was a noble Jewish ruler, a member of the Sanhedrim, and a teacher of Israel. He belonged to the sect of the Pharisees, and seems to have been a candid and noble minded man, but ignorant of the work of the Spirit. He was carnally minded. Christ told him of the need of the New Birth, but he could not understand it. Christ, full of goodness and mercy, then explained it to him as being born of the water and spirit, but Nicodemus was more astonished than ever. It all seemed strange and dark to him. He said, "How can these things be?" At the same time, Christ's language was clear and spiritual. Nothing like it had ever been spoken. It came from the lips of Him who spoke as never man had spoken. The New Birth can, indeed, only be properly understood by those who are "born again."

It might be asked why should men write on the words of Christ. Is not the Gospel sufficiently clear as it is? In reply it may be said that Christ spoke much in parables, and under symbols. And even where he used the simplest and clearest language, it is so weighty and rich that a great deal may be said on it, and much blessed instruction received from it. His sayings may be likened to great masses of gold out of each of which many sovereigns may be coined and given to the poor. He has left to His chosen servants the work of preaching and explaining His word.

There is a promise to those who will seek, that they will find. Christ also said: "He that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. Never any one perished seeking salvation through Christ. But there is still much ignorance on this subject. This is owing to the fact that many persons ignorant of the New Birth have undertaken to be teachers of the people. Such a one was Nicodemus. Many like him have since undertaken to teach others. Our Saviour said of such;—"They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." Matt. 15:14. Graceless preachers only mislead people, make spiritual matters darker, and ruin souls. The subject is here set forth in plain words, so as to be easily understood. My object is to be of some service to the unsaved sinner, to show him his need of the New Birth, the nature of that blessed change, and how

and where it is to be found. I speak of things I do know. My wish is to benefit others, but especially young people, who are still unconverted.

I will try to show the sad state of the natural man, his need of a change of heart, the hurtful errors that are still held on this subject, but chiefly to explain the New Birth, its nature, and the blessings of the spiritual man. I will also give some of the marks of the New Birth, taken mostly from the word of God, so that the reader may apply them to his own case, examine himself in the light of them, and learn whether he has been *born again* or not. The Holy Spirit brings forth the same fruits in all hearts in which He dwells, produces the same feelings, and bestows the same blessings.

May the Holy Spirit, the author of the New Birth, grant us His aid, and shed His glorious and heavenly light abundantly upon the subject. We will, then, with the help of the Lord, go on to study the New Birth under the following heads:—

- I. THE NATURAL MAN.
- II. THE GREAT NEED OF THE SOUL.
- III. MISTAKES ABOUT THE NEW BIRTH.
- IV. WHAT THE NEW BIRTH IS.
- V. BLESSEDNESS OF THE RENEWED MAN.
- VI. AN APPEAL TO THE UNSAVED.
- VII. MARKS OF THE NEW BIRTH.

THE NATURAL MAN.

Nicodemus is a good type of the natural man. There could be no better. He was learned; he was candid; he was noble. His abilities were at least fair. There is nothing unreasonable claimed for him here. I think it can all be gathered from John's Gospel. Why he came to Jesus by night is not very easily decided, as there are three or four opinions advanced on that point. Some suppose that during the day he had no leisure, that he had been busily employed. Others think that he was afraid of the Sanhedrim, of which he was a member. Others are of the opinion that he was ashamed of being seen in the company of so poor and humble a man. Some again, suppose that he wished to speak privately with Christ, and unbosom his own mind to Him more fully than he would like to do in the presence of the multitude which so often surrounded Jesus in public. The last opinion seems to my mind the likeliest. But it is a point on which we cannot be sure. How-

ever, it is not a matter of great importance. The reader may adopt which ever of these opinions seems the likeliest to him. Some are in the habit of finding fault with Nicodemus for coming by night. But there is such a thing as being too ready to find fault with others. He is the only one that we read of who came by night to Christ. Our blessed Saviour received him and found no fault with him for coming at so late an hour. Since Christ found no fault with him, we should let him alone.

1. THE NATURAL IS IGNORANT. Nicodemus could not understand spiritual things. He could not know what the New Birth was, nor what it meant. He did not feel that he himself was a guilty and ruined sinner. He felt not the load of sin and guilt that was upon his soul. He had not been taught that a change of heart was necessary. His teachers were ignorant of it, and could not teach it to others. He felt not that he was sinful and blind. On the contrary, he thought, as other natural men think, that he was all right as he was, that he was good enough, as good as the best men, and better than many. The very nature of ignorance is to make men feel that they are better than others. He had no feelings of his need as a sinner. He was well pleased with himself as he was, and marvelled that Christ spoke to him as he did.

2. HE WAS BOLD. The nature of ignorance is to make a man bold. When one feels that everything in his life and conduct is as it ought to be, he cannot feel very backward. Besides, Nicodemus' learning and standing in society helped to make him bold. He was, it appears, a man highly respected by the people. He spoke boldly but respectfully to Christ. On account of His wonderful miracles, he acknowledged Him as a teacher come from God. He called him *Rabbi*, a title of high honor among the Jews. His object was not to ensnare Christ in His words and report Him to the authorities. He appears to us candid and sincere. However, his mind was not on the New Birth, but on learning. He thought, no doubt, that he would hear some great things from the teacher come from God, as he called Christ. And so he did hear most wonderful things from Him, but not what he expected. In his address he was complimentary to Christ, and certainly expected to be praised in turn. He was disappointed. Nicodemus went so far as the world goes. Some worldly men can say very nice and complimentary things. He came far short of what Christ was. He did not say, You are the Son of God. Practically, he denied Christ's *divinity*. He only placed Him on an equality with one of the prophets or great teachers. Jesus was a great deal more than priests and prophets. This Nicodemus did not know.

3. HE WAS MISERABLE. The natural man is in a miserable state. He is ignorant of the ways of God. He is blind as to his own sinfulness. He is in a ruinous state. The state in which the unpardoned sinner is, displeases God. It is but a career of sin and folly. God created man for His own glory. But instead of honoring and glorifying God, he is continually dishonoring Him, breaking His commandments, and slighting the blessings of His grace. The sinner in this state is at enmity with God. His mind is carnal. "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:6-8. We learn from this portion of the word of God that the carnally minded man is spiritually dead. Spiritual death means that one is without love to God, and without any holy and heavenly desires. He loves not the things that are of God. This is the negative side of his case. By the negative side of his case is meant that which is wanting in his nature. But there is more than a want in his nature. In Rom. 8:7, we learn that "The carnal mind is enmity against God." The carnally minded man hates God, opposes Him, and dislikes His ways as well as His person. He is an enemy to God. This is the positive side of his nature. He is engaged, at least in his mind, against God; and many of the carnally minded are openly and professedly opposed to God. The reason is plain: "The carnal mind cannot be subject to the law of God." The very nature of the "carnal mind" is to oppose God, just as it is the nature of fire to burn. The natural man, kind, quiet, and obliging, is full of enmity against God.

The *natural* man is a *hypocrite*. Hypocrisy, like every other sin, has its place in fallen human nature. "Surely every man walketh in a vain show." Ps. 39:6. This leads men to assume to be what they are not, and sometimes to make a false profession of religion. Some, indeed, may be sincere in making even a false profession, so far as human sincerity goes. They were thinking that they were really converted. But all false profession is hypocrisy in the sight of God, and adds to man's guilt. "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." 2 Cor. 13:5. If people would only examine themselves in the light of God's word, they might be saved from making a false profession. Nicodemus, though in other respects an honorable man, had made a false profession of religion, and had undertaken to teach others. Christ disapproved of a graceless ministry, whatever men may say to the contrary. I know that many plausible excuses are made in favor of men who undertake to preach before they are converted. But hear what Christ said: "Art thou a master of Israel and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." John 3:10, 11.

No one can teach others what he himself does not know, and this is what every graceless teacher undertakes to do. Man cannot teach what he does not know, no more than water can rise above its level. The natural man also is born with his back towards Heaven and his face towards hell; and if he continues till death in his course, he will perish forever. His end will be everlasting woe. He will at last fall into a dark, bottomless, burning pit, called hell; and once there the day of mercy is past.

The graceless man is in danger every minute of his life. "He that believeth not on the Son of God is condemned already." John 3:18. "And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36.

The Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth," Ps. 11:5.

"The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked. Prov. 3:33.

"Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." Prov. 11:21.

"God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day," Ps. 7:11.

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. 3:10.

"And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. 2:1.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14.

"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled." Col. 1:21.

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." John 8:44.

Many other passages might be quoted to show the miserable condition of man as a sinner; but surely the foregoing will suffice. All natural men are endowed with the same sinful dispositions; but some have gone much farther into sin than others. By nature all men are equal: one is no better than another. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All the human race, from Adam down, are fallen, ruined, and lost. True enough, some have gone on more in wickedness than others; but as the word of God abundantly shows, "There is none *righteous*, no not *one*." Nicodemus is the highest type of the natural man. But by nature he has the same sinful dispositions as the poorest and most degraded man. The little child when born has the same sinful and fallen nature as the grown up and hardened sinner. The root of sin is the same in all mankind, young and old, male and female, learned and unlearned.

Again, *man is not able to save himself*. "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5:40. "I said therefore unto you,

that ye shall die in your sin; for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins. John 8:24. Salvation is to be found in Christ alone. He is the only Saviour. But it is unnecessary to say much on the subject of man's inability here. We learn from the word of God that man is condemned already; is under the wrath of God, is cursed of God on account of sin, and hated of God. He is also wicked, alienated from God, and an enemy to God. He is dead in trespasses and sins. He hates and despises God. All the powers of his nature are opposed to God. He was born in the kingdom of Satan, and loves darkness rather than light. To remain as he is pleases him well. Man by the fall is of his father the devil. He has the same wicked dispositions and lusts. He is full of murder, lies, uncleanness, theft, spite, and all other sins. And if he dies in this awful state, he will fall into hell. A change of heart is surely needed. This change is the New Birth.

THE GREAT NEED OF THE SOUL.

When we see a dead body, we at once know that the great need of it is life. Nothing can be done for it when there is no life. Nothing that men can do will avail anything till life be restored. Medicine, food, and raiment will be of no benefit so long as there is no life. Man's dead body is but a corrupting piece of clay, blind and motionless. Man's soul is spiritually dead. "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:17. Man did eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree, and that day he died spiritually. Then the dead are blind. There is no sight in their eyes. They cannot see the beautiful world God created, nor the Heaven's above. Those born blind have never seen the sun, moon, and stars. Those beautiful orbs of light they never beheld. They never saw the grandeur of the mountains, nor the sweet beauties of the valleys. They never saw the hills and valleys clothed in their beautiful mid-summer garments: nor the beauty of the flowers in all their varied hues and colors, like golden, and crimson, and scarlet, and pure white stars, looking up from earth to Heaven; nor the waving corn fields. Neither did they see the rivers and the ocean; nor the colors of the rainbow. Neither can they behold the face of man; it delights us to see the countenances of our dear ones. Still greater is the loss of those who are spiritually blind. They cannot see the beauties of the spiritual world. They cannot see any beauty in God's people, in spiritual worship, in the word of God, in Jesus Christ. They shall not see Heaven and its glories. Spiritual things they cannot understand. Great is the loss of those spiritually

blind. Then, again, man is powerless of himself to procure spiritual blessings. If the New Birth does not take place, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. Here is inability. He is not able to gain an entrance into the Kingdom of God; into His Kingdom of grace here or glory hereafter. No one by his own powers can open a door for himself into the Kingdom of God. Man cannot enter by his own prayers or self-righteousness. Our own efforts are not sufficient to gain admission to God's favor. Many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able. Without the New Birth none can enter in. The New Birth is the door of entrance into the Kingdom of God. It will be, friend, a great loss to remain outside of Heaven. If one dies without the needed preparation for Heaven, he will never be able to prepare. The day of grace has passed away, and will never return. The losses of this world may be repaired, but the loss of the soul never can. It is an eternal loss. Man has no power in himself to prepare his own soul for Heaven. Every move he makes in his own strength to make himself better, is but going farther from God.

We see then that there are great wants in the unconverted soul. There is no life in it; there is no light in it; there is no power in it. It is spiritually blind, powerless, and unclean. Would you not like, friend, to see Jesus in His glorious beauty? Would you not like to see the glories of Heaven, and taste its joys? You certainly answer, "Yes!" The door for the glorious preparation for Heaven is by the New Birth. This is the door to light and eternal life.

MISTAKES ABOUT THE NEW BIRTH.

There are still many mistakes made with regard to the New Birth. Many errors are, even at the present time, held on this great subject. The reason is that there are many teaching the people who do not understand what the New Birth is. Errors on this subject were held from the earliest times. We will now refer to some of the most dangerous of those errors.

Let us begin with the Jews, as being the earliest nation that had the best acquaintance with the worship of the true God. There was, indeed, some acquaintance with the worship of Jehovah before the Deluge, but it faded away amidst the vices and corruptions of that degenerate age, and sinful people. God at last destroyed the old world by a flood. God gave His statutes and ordinances to Israel. But after a time the Jewish church began to corrupt. The priesthood became vain, worldly, self-righteous, and hypocritical. Still they kept the forms of the true wor-

ship, mixed with much of their own inventions. The teachers of the people laid many heavy burdens on men, but would not touch any of these burdens themselves with one of their fingers; that is would not observe any of these things themselves. When Christ came into the world He found the church in a deplorable state, both the teachers and people steeped in sin. The sect of the Pharisees was particularly proud and hypocritical. Nearly all spiritual knowledge was lost, and the people become carnally minded.

The Jews substituted *circumcision* and *descent from Abraham* for the work of the Spirit. They substituted these things as a ground of acceptance with God instead of faith in Christ. There was a tradition among them that no circumcised person could enter hell. John the Baptist said: "And think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our Father," Matt. 3:9.

"They answered Him, we be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man," John 8:33.

"They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father," John 8:39.

On circumcision and descent from Abraham, the Jews largely built their hope for Heaven, making these things equal to the New Birth.

The Roman Catholics believe that they were born again when the water of BAPTISM was applied to them, that they were then made heirs of God and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. Their religious guides have substituted their own works for the work of the Spirit; hence they set the glorious work of the Spirit at naught, and trust in an ordinance. They make Baptismal Regeneration, or the application of the water of Baptism to the person, the New Birth. They exclude the work of the Holy Spirit in Regeneration.

But Protestants will not err in either of the two ways described above. They know much better than either Jews or Catholics, because they have been taught better. They will not certainly err after the same manner as Jews and Roman Catholics. They will not put circumcision, descent from Abraham, or Baptism, in place of the New Birth.

Protestants, however, fall into other mistakes with regard to the New Birth; mistakes just as ruinous to souls as those of either Jews or Roman Catholics.

The first of these is a reformation of character. Man will begin the work thus.—Well, I find that it is not respectable to curse and swear as I do. People will look down on myself and my family. Or the man may be addicted to lying or cheating, etc., etc. He makes up in his own mind that he will not swear, cheat, or lie, etc., as much as he used to. "I will not, he says, "carry on as I used to. I will swear less, and go to church oftener, and attend prayer meeting occasionally. I will be more careful in future where minister or elders hear me. Then

I will get church privileges—baptism for my children, and by and by I will join the church, and be a good man, at least as good as my neighbor and perhaps better. I will be as good as any of them; and better than many. I will pay so much to the minister, and so much to the *schemes*." However well old Adam will be patched up and painted, he will be but the old man, full of sin and corruption.

Then man will betake himself to good works, as prayers, giving to the poor, speaking on religious subjects, etc. The Scribes and Pharisees made very long, and likely, beautiful prayers, well worded and well expressed, but without any benefit to themselves or others. They stood up to pray at the corners of streets and in other public places, where they could be seen by the multitude. They also gave their gifts in public, to be seen of men, and praised by them. The law they observed, in the letter, with great care. It is the same still with the graceless professors in the church. Giving and prayer is not forgotten by them, but these are always done for the praise of men, and not from love to God and to men. The weightier matters, as love, justice, and mercy are forgotten by them, or lightly passed over.

Without the New Birth, reformation and good works only lead one into self-righteousness and pride. Once a man becomes self-righteous there is little hope of his coming any more to Christ for salvation. Certainly, some of them will turn to the Lord and be saved, but I think that it is safe to say that the number will be few. Some of those get so far as to be good enough in their own estimation; and then they will not seek a change of heart.

The third thing that people mistake for the New Birth is *impressions*. Some men had impressions at some time, and these they took for a change of heart. They shed tears and were in some trouble about their soul; and these impressions they mistook for Regeneration. When those impressions died away, all went with them, for there was no more. "Their goodness was as the morning cloud and the early dew that goeth away," They had tastes of the joys of the world to come, but only tastes. Heb. 6:4-6. They were partly awakened, but fell again asleep. They felt their guilt to a certain extent, there was some conviction for sin, but it was only a partial work—feelings and impression. These will die away after a time. Sometimes when lighting a fire you think it is going to burn, you go away and leave it, and after a while return and find it gone out. Thus it is with impressions. They die away by and by. Reformation, good works, and impression are good in their proper place and time, but none of them, or all put together, will do in place of the New Birth. Trusting in them is everlasting ruin.

Many have tried to work out their own righteousness and made shipwreck of salvation. We cannot be too earnest or too particular

here. To make a mistake in the affair of the New Birth will lead to eternal ruin. When anyone believes all is not right with him, it is most natural that he should try to do something to put himself right. When people hear the Gospel and learn that they are not right with God then they begin, many of them, to do something in the way of preparing themselves to please Him. All that men do in this way is only putting them farther from God, and from salvation. The right way is to go as you are to Christ and tell Him your case.

There are some who come near the New Birth. We read of some who were not far from the Kingdom of Heaven. One of those was King Saul, to whom God gave another heart, 1 Sam. 10:9, 10, 11; 16:14. He prophesied also. He was quite another man for a time. Many a person was changed for a time into another man. Many a man made a reformation and people speaking of him would say that he was another man. They would see his ways different altogether from what they once were. But he did not get a new heart, and he was not a new man. In proof of this we may refer to the New Testament.

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through the dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

"Then he saith, I will return unto my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

"Then he goeth and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there," Matthew, 12:43, 44, 45.

It is quite plain from this portion of the word of God that the unclean spirits, or devils, can go in and out of those possessed of them. In this case there was evidently a reformation. The house or dwelling place, was found swept and garnished. Great improvement had been made; but, alas, it was found empty. It was not filled with the Holy Spirit. This is simply the case of one who has changed his habits, given up his sinful and filthy ways, and who continues for a while to lead an exemplary life, but after a time falls back again into his sinful ways, like the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire, and miserably perishes. Another case in point is Balaam. Num. 23:15-30. The Apostle said of some: "Which have forsaken the right way and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but was rebuked for his iniquity; the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet," 2 Peter 2:15, 16.

King Saul's prophecy did not amount to much. Not one word of it is recorded for the benefit of the church. We have of Balaam's only that which he spoke against his will. He attempted to curse Israel, but had to bless them. The Lord could get even a dumb ass to speak for Him. "Man may have the gift of prophecy, and have no love for God," 1 Cor. 13:2.

Both King Saul and Balaam showed that they lacked love to God. Both disobeyed Him. There is no greater mark of want of love than disobedience. Again Simon Magus professed his faith in Christ, and was received by the disciples, but showed ere long that he was "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity," Acts 8:23.

Like Simon, many others made fair profession. Paul was "in danger from false brethren," 2 Cor. 11:26. "There were false Apostles; "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, and his ministers into the ministers of righteousness," 2 Cor. 11:14.

Then, again, we see that the seed sown on stony ground and among thorns grew up all right, but brought nothing to maturity. It withered away or was choked up. These had certain experiences and enjoyment, but it all faded away," Matt. 13:20, 21, 22. We see the same thing in Hebs. 6:4, 5, 6.

In all these cases there was a partial work of the Spirit; certain operations of the Spirit, as enlightenment, tastes, joy, etc. They endured for a while. These are not they that will be saved, "For we are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end," Hebs. 3:14. It is "Those that continue to the end that will be saved." To be almost a Christian will not do. There is danger of putting profession in place of the New Birth.

Let us now suppose a few cases tried at the Day of Judgment. (1). A false professor makes his defence thus:—"I am a church member; I have been recognized as godly; elders and ministers said so. Besides I was supporting the cause, praying, and leading a moral life." The Judge says: "That is all true; but you lack one thing. You are not born again." (2). An elder comes before the Judge of all the earth and says: "I was an elder in the church for many years, teaching Sabbath School, leading a class, and leading prayer meetings, and did much good; was zealous for the cause." The Judge answers: "You lack one thing. You are not born again." (3). A minister comes before the Judge, and makes his defence as follows: "I was pastor of such a church, had much success in my ministry, converted thousands, worked miracles, cast out devils, wrote volumes of sermons, preached well, had crowds hearing me: and in recognition of my services and abilities, to say nothing of my learning, I received the degree of D. D." The Judge replies; "You lack one thing. You are not born again."

Now, impressions, reformation, profession, and learning, will not do in the place of the New Birth. These are good enough in their proper place; but will not do in place of a new heart. Hear what the Holy Spirit says in reference to this matter: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will put my spirit within you," Ezek 36:26, 27. There must be a new heart and a

right spirit put in man. He must be made a new man. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. Do not, friend, put anything in place of the New Birth; and do not remain on the wrong side of it; do not come short of it.

WHAT THE NEW BIRTH IS.

The New Birth is a change of heart; a change by which the sinner receives a new heart and a right spirit. The old heart, as described in the word of God, "is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." There are three words used in describing this change of heart,—the *New Birth*, *Regeneration*, and *Conversion*.

New Birth is the simplest of these terms, and the one most easily understood. It is figurative and means coming into new life.

The word *Regeneration* is also used by writers on this subject, and means begetting, a creating anew. It is the same thing as the *New Birth*, but is not so simple and readily understood.

Besides these, the term *Conversion* is very often used in speaking of a change of heart; but is more liable to be misunderstood than either of the other words—Regeneration and New Birth. The word *Conversion* means turning from, and is very commonly applied to the New Birth. It is indeed a turning from a downward course of sin and folly to serve the living and true God; a turning from the way of death to the way of life. And Jesus said, "Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven," Matt. 18:3. Conversion is certainly applied to the New Birth in this place. But it is also applied to cases of backsliding, or falling into sin or error after the New Birth has taken place. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins," James 5:19, 20. We see from these verses that the sinner must be converted from the error of his way when he falls into errors or backslides. In other words when he errs from the right way he must be turned back to it, or converted from the error of his way; so a man may be converted many times. But the New Birth only takes place *once*, just as natural birth takes place *once*. The term conversion is then applied to two different cases, as may be seen from the passages referred to above.

In this little work I have generally used the term *New Birth* in preference to the others, as being the simplest and the most expressive.

The New Birth then means a change of heart, by which change one

gets a new heart. The testimony of the Holy Spirit concerning man's heart is that it is wicked. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," Jer. 17:9. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart was only evil continually," Gen. 6:5.

Man's heart has by sin become evil and wicked. Through sin Satan got possession of man's heart. Christ was casting devils out of men when He was on earth. He is still casting them out, and taking possession. Christ dwells in men's hearts here by His Holy Spirit, and thus makes it a new heart. The old sinful heart of unbelief, which we received from old Adam, was full of lusts, evil thoughts, evil purposes. The dispositions of the old heart are all evil. This is abundantly expressed in both the Old and New Testament: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God," Rom. 3:19. David prayed to God to create in him a new heart: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me," Ps. 51:10. Man needs then to be "born again," or created anew. "Now, if anyone is in Christ Jesus he is a new creature," 2 Cor. 5:17. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." Gal. 5:19, 20, 21.

The sins mentioned in the forgoing verses form indeed a very dark picture. But such is man in his fallen state. In heathen lands they indulge in all manner of sin without any shame. In Christian lands graceless men are restrained by law, and society, and education; but all the same those sins are in their heart, and they are inclined to them. It is as natural to the graceless man, when left to himself, to indulge in all manner of sin, as it is for him to breathe the air or eat his food. His heart is full of such sins. These sins, or body sin, is "the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," Eph. 4:22. All who continue in these sins, and such like, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. A change must take place.

Let us now look at the fruit of the Spirit. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." These are the fruits produced in the heart and in the life by the Holy Spirit.

All uncleanness and wickedness, called the works of the flesh, are produced in the heart by Satan. And all the blessed fruits produced in the heart, as joy, love, peace, etc., spring from the Holy Spirit who dwells there. Now the difference between those two states is very great. The first, namely that of the flesh, is a state of bondage and misery;

the other, the spiritual, is a blessed state of joy, peace, happiness, and freedom. They are as different from one another as mid-winter is from mid-summer, or night from day. Satan got possession first by the fall of man. He must be cast out, and Christ must enter and dwell in the heart by His Holy Spirit. This is a great change. Unless this change takes place the soul will perish forever. This change is what is called the New Birth. It is a new creation. The soul is created anew. Then man can create nothing. It is not a new soul that man gets in the New Birth. It is the same soul as he had before, but with new desires, feelings, motives, purposes, and powers. We may illustrate it something in this way: A man has an old wrecked, decayed house on his farm, all in ruins, but the walls still there. He says to an architect: "Well I do not want another house built, but I want the old one renewed. Repairing will not do: I want the old walls made up new without removing any material; that's what I want." The architect replies: "What you want, I am not able to do; you ask an impossibility. I will build you a new house entirely, or repair the old one; but to make the old one new again is utterly impossible to any man. But this is what the Lord does to our ruined souls. He does not give us a new soul as to substance; but, by His divine power, He renews the ruined old soul. He makes it anew. It is like the old house made up anew, all the same as it was at first, only it is enlarged and beautified and embellished. But the furniture is different from that of the first house. The furniture of the first old house was of iron; but that of the renewed house is of gold. The iron furniture of the old house was thrown out, and new furniture—all golden—put into the renewed house. The furniture gives great beauty and value to the house. Besides this golden furniture cannot be removed from the renewed house; it is immovable. It is gold the purest and best; the gold of *Ophir*. The renewed soul I compare to this renewed house. It is the same soul that you had before the New Birth; the same walls, the same soul as to substance, but the furniture is not the same as before. The Holy Spirit dwells in it now, and fills it with new desires, thoughts, motives, and purposes, and makes it a glorious soul, shedding His own glorious light and knowledge abroad in it. The Holy Spirit cannot be removed. This golden furniture frightens Satan away from the house, if he should peep in at a window.

"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion.

"God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

"For lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

"They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away.

"Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail," Ps. 48:2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

The Holy Spirit dwells in the renewed soul. He who has beautified the sun, moon, and stars, who has given them their shining beauty, who has given the sun its golden rays, must himself be inconceivably beautiful. "The King's daughter is all glorious within," Ps. 45: 13.

Not only is the Holy Spirit beautiful in the soul, and glorious, too, but He is an infinite power there. No enemy will be able to overcome Him, and throw Him out. There is no power in nature to make any thing that is old and decayed new again; nor can any man renew any building, etc. Man can build a new house, but he cannot make an old one new. This indeed, is the most difficult thing in the universe. God could create a world by the word of His power; create man out of the dust of the ground, and breathe into him the breath of life. But no exercise of power could restore and renew the ruined soul of man. There was only one way of doing it. The Son of God must become man, and die in our nature. In His death our souls have life, and in His blood cleansing. He could create a sun to shine in the firmament by the word of His power; but to renew a soul He must die. There was no other way of giving life to a dead soul. Consider then, dear friend, what Jesus has done to restore your soul to life, to create you anew in the image of God, which had been lost by the *fall*.

This is a great change indeed by which the soul is renewed, enlightened, and filled with the peace of God, so that there is now favor with God. This change has come by the New Birth.

THE NATURE OF THE NEW BIRTH.

The nature of the New Birth is described in the following words: "Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God," John 3:5,

This is not at all a different subject from our text at the beginning of our sermon, but a further explanation of it. Christ here simplified the subject of the New Birth as being born of the water and the Spirit. This is certainly an explanation of what He said in verse third. But the language is still figurative and symbolic. Still Nicodemus could not understand what Christ was teaching. The subject is as dark as midnight to him. The language of Christ is spiritual, and the mind of Nicodemus is carnal. Strange language says Nicodemus to himself. I have graduated in the best schools in the kingdom, and been instructed by the most learned Rabbis, and I never heard the like of that. It is not at all what I had expected to hear from Him. I was indulging the hope that I would hear Him explain some difficult theory, explain to me something mysterious out of the prophets, or show me some miracle, or tell me the power by which He works them. But no! This is not at

all what I expected ; I am disappointed in Him. His subject is a new and strange one. I understand Him not. At last Nicodemus speaks out to Christ and says, "How can these things be?" John 3:9. He was astonished at the new doctrine he heard. He understood not the meaning of what he heard. Nor can any natural man understand them. Nicodemus as a natural man is exactly like all graceless men. The natural man of our day can no more understand spiritual things than Nicodemus could. Spiritual things can only be properly understood by being enjoyed. Mere talk about them will not much benefit anyone. To hear that a certain man has a good suit of clothes, or a fine house, or good food, will not do us any good unless we get food, clothing, and shelter ourselves. We will still remain hungry and cold. Spiritual blessings are only understood and enjoyed by those who have them in possession. It is impossible by any language to make the natural man understand spiritual things. He must get them himself ere he can know what they are. We read about manna that it was sweet, white, like coriander seeds. But give me a dish of it, and let me make a good dinner of it, and then I will know what it is, but not till then. We must be partakers of spiritual things before we know properly what they are.

1. *Born of the Spirit.* What does He mean by that? He means that your soul is dead, Nicodemus. Every man is born with a dead soul. That is a soul destitute of love to God, or desires for anything good ; without feelings of need of salvation ; feeling good enough ; a soul perfectly satisfied as it is. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it ; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," Gen. 2:17. Adam did eat of the fruit of this tree and died spiritually that very day ; that is lost all love for God, and all communion with Him.

"And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. 2:1. The image of God, which was lost in the fall is here restored. The dead soul is brought to life or quickened. It is made a living soul. Now it is possessed of life. It has feelings of need, of pleasure, and of pain ; it has heavenly and holy desires. The man quickened into life understands now the state in which he was before. He understands his relation to God and man, and the duties devolving upon him. "And we know that the Son of God is come and given us an understanding," 1 John 5:20. The new heart, given us by the Holy Spirit, is an understanding heart, responsive to the will of God, and desirous of doing the will of God ; it is a feeling heart, a tender heart, a heart producing the fruits of the Holy Spirit in the life of man. Christians are known by the fruits they bring forth. A good tree must bring forth good fruit.

They are risen with Christ in a spiritual resurrection. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God," Col. 3:1.

The quickened soul is a risen soul—risen from the grave of spiritual death. As Christ arose from the grave by a glorious resurrection, so dead souls are risen up by a glorious spiritual resurrection. Those who will not be quickened into spiritual life will die the second death; that means that they will, body and soul, be cast into hell at last; this is also eternal death. Christ says: "I give unto them eternal life," John 10:28. He said also: "And whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die," John 11:26. The quickened soul is a believing soul. The life imparted to the dead soul shall never die. He receives everlasting life, pure, heavenly, joyful. The life the Christian now, after the spiritual resurrection, leads is as different from that which he formerly led as day is from night. The sinful things he once loved, he now hates. His desires are now after Christ; none but Christ will please him.

2. *Born of the water.* What does that mean? It means that your soul is unclean, Nicodemus. Water has a cleansing power. This is one of its chief uses, and every one needs it. We need it to clean our bodies, our clothes, and our homes. Sin has defiled our souls. Sin is the filth of hell, and fits the unclean soul for that horrid place. The teaching to Nicodemus and all others is that the soul needs cleansing. If souls could enter heaven in the filth of sin, they would terrify angels and saints, saints I think most of all, because they better understand what sin is, having suffered more from it when in the body. Graceless souls would be the dread and disgust of all in Heaven. The image of Satan himself could be seen in them, in unholy dispositions and wicked desires. Satan could show himself in them, for he is in the souls that are not cleansed from the uncleanness of sin. There is a vast difference between the blackened and soiled garment or cloth, and the one pure and clean, washed and bleached. The washed, clean cloth can now be spread out on the table before the King. So the cleansed soul is pleasing and delightful to all in Heaven—pleasing to God Himself. The unpardoned sinner is unclean, but he does not know it. David, in the 51st Psalm, is praying earnestly for cleansing and washing: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be whiter than snow," Psa. 51:7. Diverse washings were used under the Old Testament dispensation, and also sprinkling. The bodies of men, their garments and vessels, were washed and sprinkled with clean water: "And the Lord said unto Moses, go unto the people and sanctify them to-day, and let them wash their cloths," Ex. 19:10.

"And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water," Ex. 29:4.

"And I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean," Ezek. 36:25.

"Having our bodies washed with pure water," Hebs. 10:22.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy he saved us by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," Titus 3:5.

Sin is the cause of all spiritual uncleanness, and in order to be saved, we must be cleansed from all its filth. The unclean shall not enter into Heaven. It is a pure place; it is purity itself, and so everything that enters it must be cleansed and made pure. We have here the washing of regeneration spoken of. This cleansing is the New Birth or Regeneration.

THE AUTHOR OF THE NEW BIRTH.

The author of the New Birth is the Holy Spirit. Christ finished the work the Father gave Him to do in this world. He said on the cross, "It is finished." The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, and the third person of the blessed Trinity, has come into the world, and is in the world. The work of regeneration is His. He is the one that begins the work, carries it on, and completes it.

The commencement of the work is conviction of sin. No one will accept of salvation until he feels his need of it. So long as man feels well enough, or so long as he feels that he can get along as he is, or that he can do anything for himself, he will never accept of Christ as a Saviour. Generally, under the preaching of the word, the Spirit commences His work of conviction. But to this there are exceptions. It may be when reading the word, in conversation with some godly person, or reading the works of godly men. But in all these there is a reference to the word of God. Talking with the pious, or reading the works of godly authors, comes to God's word; the word of God must be their theme. Both reading and conversation are helpful in leading sinners to repentance, and to seeking the Lord. The word of God is the sword of the Spirit. Men take hold of a sword with the hand and use it to defend themselves, and strike at the enemy. Thus the Spirit takes the word of God and uses it. He defends with it as Christ and His people did, and as God's people still do. "But Jesus answered and said, it is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," Matt. 4:4.

Christ here referred to the written word of God, and opposed it to the suggestion of Satan; and thus overcame Him in the temptation.

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," Eph. 6:17.

The word of God then is the weapon with which Christians fight. It is the weapon God Himself gave them, and must be sufficient for the fight in which they are engaged against the enemy of their souls.

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds," 2 Cor. 10:4.

"For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart," Hebs. 4:12.

God's word then is a powerful, sharp, and piercing weapon, mighty to the pulling down the strongholds of sin and Satan in the human soul. Christ commanded His disciples to preach the Gospel to every creature, in order to the salvation of those who would believe. This was His last command. Matt. 28:19-20.

The effect of the preaching of the word of God is seen in the Acts of the Apostles: "While Peter yet spake these words the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word," Acts 10:44.

This was the effect of the preached word. Then on the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached we read: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do?" Acts 2:37.

Now this last is the effect of the preached word upon the unpardoned sinner, when he is convinced of his sin. The preached word pricked their hearts and they said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They are willing now to take advice from the Apostles. Before they used to call them fellows, Nazarenes, and such like; but now they call them men, brethren, respectful terms, terms of endearment and friendship. The way of salvation they despised before; they are willing now to be saved in that way. What shall we do? Their own resources are exhausted. They know not what to do; and yet they feel that something must be done, or they will be lost. They are willing now, perfectly willing, to be saved. They are pricked, or pierced sore, in their hearts. The "word of the living God, quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, has pierced even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit," Hebs. 4:12. They are made willing to submit themselves to the Lord on any conditions. What shall we do, however difficult, to be saved? They are convinced that there is salvation, but how to secure that salvation is with them the question. They feel and confess that they are unable of themselves to accomplish anything in the salvation of their souls. Man will never accept salvation so long as he feels that he can do anything to save himself. So long as he has even one straw to grasp at, he will not give up; so long as he has the least hope in his own self-righteousness, or his own good works, he will not surrender himself to the mercy of God. Everything he has of his own to rely upon, must be removed first, or he will not feel that he is entirely lost. He must first become helpless as a little child, who submits to be washed, fed, clothed, and nursed by others. They do not

now, as formerly, feel good enough to be saved and go to Heaven, but, on the contrary, bad enough to be lost forever and sent to hell. Formerly, indeed, they felt that they were safe, but now they feel that they are lost! entirely lost and undone. Man is never prepared to receive salvation till he feels that he is entirely lost; and that God is justified in punishing him forever. The cry, what shall we do to be saved? came from their heart, from a pierced heart, bleeding and painful. The pierced heart will bleed, feel intense pain, and the animal life thereof will ebb away. The man will die. So the soul pierced with the sword of the Spirit will die to all self-righteousness, self-justification, self-conceit, and will accept of the glorious righteousness of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. The first work of the Holy Spirit then in the salvation of souls is to produce conviction of sin—not a partial conviction, but a complete conviction, a conviction that he is entirely sinful and guilty.

When such conviction as this is produced, the poor undone sinner is willing to listen to God's servants, and take counsel from them. His pride is humbled. His boastful spirit is bowed down. It is not how grand a man is now, or how rich and respectable he is; but can he tell me how to be saved? This is the question that is now uppermost in the penitent man's mind. Oh! I feel a terrible load on my soul; my conscience accuses me most awfully. This is indeed a pain that I never felt before. Bodily pain is nothing to my pain; to remain forever in this way would be hell enough. Oh! that I could get clear of this burning load, heavier than the mountains! What shall I do? Happy is inanimate creation that cannot feel. Happy are the beasts of the field that have never sinned, never broken God's commandments, as I have done to my own hurt and everlasting misery.

THE SOUL IS RENEWED.

The next stage is conversion, or the New Birth. The sinner having been fully and completely convinced of his own sinfulness, inability to save, and the justice of his condemnation, lets go every ground of hope and falls into the arms of Christ. It is then that Christ takes him. So long as the sinner had any hope in anything he could do himself, two things stood in the way of his salvation—he could not take Christ, and Christ could not take him. But as soon as the sinner is prepared by a complete conviction, to receive salvation, Christ enters his heart; Satan has been cast out. The man is now a believer. The soul is enlightened, the soul is a renewed soul. The body of the believer is become the temple of the living God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He is now a new man; is now a child of God. The great change has taken place. "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you," Ezek. 36:26.

This great change is instantaneous. It takes place in the twinkling of an eye. The work of conviction may have been going on for a long time. We do not know how long. Of course, each person may know this in his own case. Conviction is going on longer with some than others. Some are for many years under conviction; others not so many months, or so many days. However long the work of conviction was going on, the conversion was done in an instant. Christ came to take possession of the soul, and Satan could not stand at all before Him. We may put it in this way. When Christ enters in Satan goes out. Yes, Satan goes out to return to his place in man's soul no more; Christ has possession forever. No power on earth or in hell will ever be able to move Christ from His place. The soul has received eternal life. Hebs. 12:28; John 10:28.

SANCTIFICATION.

Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit, whereby the unclean and unholy soul is cleansed, made holy, and enlightened. The work of sanctification commences with conversion, but goes on after conversion has taken place. It is the work of God's Spirit preparing the soul for eternal glory. Conversion, or the New Birth, is an act. Well, an act is a thing done by an action, and an action is a thing done quickly and not repeated. We may illustrate it thus: One stroke of a hammer is an action. But striking with a hammer for an hour or a day is a work that goes on. Conversion does not take one tick of your watch. It takes place quick as thought. But sanctification goes on from the New Birth till death. When the last touches of sanctification are finished the soul enters glory. The New Birth and sanctification commenced together; but the New Birth, being finished, was ended. It took place once and is never repeated. But the work of preparing the new born soul for eternal glory goes on till it is finished; it is a progressive work. Conversion and sanctification commenced at the same time, but sanctification continues till death; that is till the soul passes into glory. Now whether the life of a person is long or short after the New Birth, which was instantaneous, the work of sanctification goes on from that time till death.

Some are of the opinion that the converted soul is made perfectly holy the very instant the New Birth takes place. This is but an absurd idea, and contrary to the experience of Apostles and Prophets; yea, contrary to the experience of the saints in all ages and generations. It is contrary to the teaching of the word of God. In proof of which see the following:—

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and forever," 2 Peter 3:18.

"But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord," 2 Cor. 3:18.

"But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death," Roma. 7:23-24.

We easily see in the above passages that the converted man is not absolutely holy, that he is not perfect in knowledge, that he is not perfect in grace, and that he is not perfect in Christian strength. He is growing in all the graces of the Spirit. The Apostle says: "But grow in grace and knowledge." Now if a man is perfect in these graces, that is if he needs no more grace and knowledge, this precept must be absurd. When a man is done growing in bodily stature, it will be nonsense to tell him to grow. But we find that Peter, an inspired Apostle, exhorted believers to whom he was writing, to grow in grace and knowledge, which proves conclusively that they were not perfect in these graces. They could increase in them. Again, Paul, writing to the Corinthian Christians, says that we are changed into the image of the Lord from glory to glory. Now that which is perfect and complete changes not. It is finished. The change here spoken of means no doubt the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, the refreshings and renewings of that Spirit. The Apostle says in another place that our inward man is renewed from day to day. The believer is growing in the image of Christ, and this work is done by the Spirit of the Lord; that is by the Holy Spirit.

Then we see in Romans 7:23-24 that the Apostle found a law in his members warring against the law of his mind and bringing him into captivity. This led him to cry out, "O, wretched man that I am." Now a man that is perfect cannot be in such a state as the Apostle was then. A perfect man could not feel such miseries as are recorded here; he could not be wretched. Then again he says: "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure," 2 Cor. 12:7.

'If Paul was perfect what need was there of this thorn in the flesh? Would God send him such a thorn needlessly? Surely not. Besides, he besought the Lord three times that this thorn would be removed. But it was not removed. The Lord showed him the good that it would do him. Now a man that is ignorant, miserable and wretched, cannot be perfect; and people who need to grow in grace and knowledge are not perfect. If the Apostles and other Christians were not perfect, neither are we. We must take things as they are, not as we would like them to be. God has ordered everything for the best in the whole plan

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of salvation. We need to pray daily for help from the Lord. Christian perfection consists in the New Birth. By it we come into the kingdom of grace; we are perfectly in it, being not partly born again, but completely born again. It consists in sincerity, and in a perfect union with Christ; and in sincerely seeking Him and serving Him. Everything is done in the way that it conduces most to God's glory and our good.

True, we get weary here; we feel the hardness of our own hearts, and fall at times into darkness; but then the refreshings of the Holy Spirit that we get, and the renewing of the Spirit from time to time more than make up for this; yes, we receive a hundred times more than all we suffer. If all the summer was bright weather, a continual sunshine, without clouds or rain, the crops would be very poor. They would not grow properly. The dark and cloudy days are needed; yes, the wet days, in order that the crop may grow. So with us we need our troubles and adversities in order to grow in the Christian graces. It is after the dark and rainy days, when the sun shines out brightly, that it is valued. When we have had our days of darkness and sorrow, and then get God's favor and presence anew, we rejoice and sing for joy. The work of the Holy Spirit is to sanctify us and prepare us for glory; and He does it in His own good way. We must go through the wilderness to the promised land of the Heavenly Canaan. This world must become a wilderness to the gracious soul; he must become crucified to its pleasures and sinful enjoyments. "The world is crucified unto me and I unto the world," said Paul. The experiences of the godly in all ages must be ours. This is not the place of our rest, but the place to prepare for our rest. According as we are getting sanctified, we are getting less attached to this world, and more desirous of Heaven. According as we are growing in grace, we conform less and less to this world, and are transformed more and more in the spirit of our minds. The heart is being more and more cleansed from its impurities, and our spiritual darkness more and more enlightened until the perfect day. True, the Lord can and does a short work in sanctification. Those who do not live long after the New Birth are prepared in a shorter time. It is a necessity that sanctification should go on from the New Birth to death. This world is not the place for the perfectly holy and sinless. The place for the perfect is Heaven, and as soon as we are prepared for that place, we will go there.

MY OWN EXPERIENCE.

I had been under touches of conviction for several years. Now and again these would be heavier, and at other times I would not be much concerned about my soul. But private prayer I kept up from my youth. Sometimes, indeed, when a little boy I would

omit my prayers for a time, and then recommence them. I well remember engaging several times in a day in prayer, and oh, feel so good after it, thinking that I was surely a favorite of Heaven, and would get an entrance there. I thought that I was so good, being full of the spirit of the Pharisee, justifying myself by my prayers. But the feeling that I was earning Heaven for myself by my prayers was so *sweet*, so very sweet, that I delighted to be thinking of it. Vanity is truly in the heart of the youth. I continued to attend church, Sabbath School, read the Bible and prayed. It used to astonish me to hear that good people felt bad things in their heart, such as evil thoughts, hardness of heart, and felt that they were sinful. My opinion was that good men, as I used to call them, were free from all feelings of evil in their heart and were perfectly good and holy, and that they felt that they were good and holy themselves. I thought that bad men, and only bad men, felt anything bad in their heart, and that they had such a feeling because they were bad. It sounded very strange to me to hear people that knew better say that it was good people who had doubts and troubles about the things of eternity in their minds; and that the graceless ones were those who thought that they were good, and felt that they were good. I was, under the influences and instruction of the gospel, losing those opinions gradually. But there was another way. I was of the opinion that if I indulged a bad thought, uttered a cross word, or did anything improper, that a kind word, a good action, as I considered it, or a good thought would make up for it; that good and evil would balance each other; and that surely God Himself could not refuse this. I imagined that there was a way within my own reach by which I could make up for any sin in me. Then there was the thought that I was not so bad as some sinners, though not so good as some men. There was some hope yet that I would get good some future day, but not just now; that there was some bright time ahead when I could easily become a good Christian. I was thinking that I was a believer, since I assented to the word of God, and that Jesus was the Son of God, and that He had come into the world. I considered that I was a believer because I believed historical facts concerning Christ. However, I was getting a little out of these notions. Godly people could understand from some of my opinions on the work of the Spirit, that I was a stranger to grace, which some of them were faithful enough to tell me; these faithful men are those that do us good. By reading the word of God, hearing the gospel, and reading good books; and above all by hearing godly people tell their own experience, and relating the feelings and experiences of godly men, I understood that I was not a Christian man; but that I was an unsaved sinner, and would at last be lost and go to hell, if I should die in my present condition, although no man could lay any open

sin to my charge. I understood well that I was not born again, and that that great change was yet ahead of me. I did often wish it would take place, and that I would be saved. But this thought and wish were arising in a great measure, if not indeed altogether, from slavish fear. I dreaded hell and everlasting torments. I had not God's glory in view much, if any. I rather think I had none of it in my mind. My own safety and comfort were what I considered most. Sometimes I was troubled with the fear of death. A false profession I would not make. In sickness I once made a resolution to be good in future, if God would spare me. Health came from a merciful God. I was raised from the gates of death to health and strength, but as soon as health was regained I was as light minded as ever; indeed more so. All human goodness is as the "morning cloud and the early dew; it goeth away." I opened and closed my school with prayer and was rigid in inculcating decency and morality, and instructing the children in what I thought was right; but still I was graceless. The New Birth did not take place. I was ignorant of spiritual matters; what I knew of the Bible was the letter, and as for the way of life—I understood it not. I knew not Christ as my Saviour, and I knew not the peace of God in my soul. But I continued to attend church, and hear the Gospel preached. But as for the impressions that were made upon me, a little jolly company would drive them often away. However, it pleased the Lord to call me out of darkness, and save my soul. The communion season came around in the summer of 1874. (They then held but one communion in the year in that church). I went to church Saturday and heard a minister preach a faithful sermon on Hebs. 2:3: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation." Every word the preacher uttered went home to my heart; the Holy Spirit sent them home. I felt that I was utterly lost. I was undone that day. I never felt completely lost until that day. I felt that I was hell deserving, and that God would be just in sending me there forever. I never felt entirely lost before. All my hopes and all my self-confidence were gone that day. I was lost. I sometimes imagined that I could see kind of bluish flames before me. All my feeling—and oh! what awful feelings those of the awakened soul are—I tried to conceal from every one, and succeeded in doing so pretty well. I went to my boarding house with a terribly bad feeling, tried to be alone as much as possible, and not awaken any "suspicions." My thoughts were not that I was going to be saved, but that I was going to be lost; that I would die of this terrible feeling and go to hell with the devils at once. I had no ray of hope nor thought of salvation. I had neither hope nor thought that I would or could be saved. I was lost, lost! and undone. I felt in my conscience that it would be just and right for God to damn me forever, and send me to the lowest hell,

and that nothing else could be done, and that nothing but this would be done. I would feel a little easier sometimes, but the awful feeling of lost would come again to me. I felt that the day of my salvation was past, that I refused Christ and trampled His precious blood under my wicked feet for many a day. I never had felt entirely lost before. I could imagine the beauty of Heaven, which I had lost, the glory and greatness of Jehovah, as well as His goodness. But I had lost all. I could never see Him but in anger and as an enemy. I felt also my own inability to do anything to save myself; that I was powerless to save myself, and that all was lost to me forever and ever; that soon I would be along with the devils in hell, and one of them myself. In these terrible feelings I used to wander out alone into the woods and fields; for it was beautiful summer weather. How happy inanimate nature around me seemed to me. How beautiful the leafy trees and the waving cornfields, but I would soon be done of them, and go to my own place, and yet I thought that I could remember the beauties of nature in a terrible eternity. How happy the animals seemed to me—they would not suffer like me. They had not sinned. I considered that Satan was let loose upon me, and that it was he who was causing me these dreadful feelings, and that he could and would take me away; that I would soon die as these troubles of my soul would increase. To continue long in this state would indeed be miserable enough. I considered it would be hell enough; I mean it would be misery enough, if there were no greater. At night my rest was poor. I still kept my trouble to myself. I was, indeed, very much afraid that people would find it out. I was so sorry that I did not seek Christ and take Him for my Saviour in the days that were past. The thought was so sad that salvation was past, and yet I fully felt that all the fault of a neglected salvation and a lost soul was mine, and mine only; that no one else could be blamed for it; that the sin and the blame were mine only. I thought others would be so happy in Heaven when I would be blaspheming God in hell. Oh! then the thought would come to me that it would be such a terribly hot place, that it would be bad enough to suffer burning heat before a fire, but to live in fire forever and ever, oh! how awful, and still the thought was true. It is really so. The wicked must live forever and ever in hell, where increasing pain and sorrow abounds forever. It made me feel so awfully sad that I could have had salvation, that it had been so often offered me, and that it was once in my reach, but that I had hardened my heart against Christ and grieved away His Holy Spirit, and thus forever ruined my own soul. I could not find one fault with minister, or elder, or anyone else but myself. I stood self-condemned, and without one ray of hope, or any means of saving myself, or any hope of doing anything. I do not remember what my prayers

were at the time. I think that I could hardly pray. Of course I was trying to pray in secret; at least I was bowing my knees.

I went to church Sabbath day, and tried to avoid people on the road and at the church as much as possible. I offended some of my near friends by seeming not to wish to speak to them. That Sabbath day was the saddest to me that ever I passed on earth. There was no ray of hope in my soul. I heard that evening that some others were awakened under the preaching of the word, but this brought me no relief. My feeling was that they were getting good, and I getting bad: that they would be saved, but that I would be lost. I went to church Monday morning worse, if anything, than before. At the close of the service it was evident that many were affected—some were crying; and the congregation, though dismissed, would not leave the church. But I was still worse. My pain and sorrow was only increasing. I felt an awful burden on my soul, crushing me down to hell. I had by this time let go all hope; I could do nothing. I let myself, as it were, and as I felt it, drop down to be lost forever; and found myself in the arms of my dear Saviour. With my head bowed down on the back of the pew in front of me, and my eyes closed, I saw before me one hanging on a cross. The cross seemed a rough post, resembling a telegraph post, but not high. This I saw before me, but understood not what it meant. This was my blessed Saviour, who died for me. By and by I rose up, and found that my burden was removed. I was not now ashamed of Christ. That sinful shame, which the devil had put into my soul, was gone. Hell and its terrors were removed from my soul. I felt the peace of God in my heart for the first time. I knew then that I was saved.

I went away from the church that day rejoicing in a Saviour. I never knew happiness before. The joys of this world are but poor at best. Solomon has well said: "For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool; this also is vanity," Eccl. 7:6. My heart was full of peace and joy; everything seemed to me new. The Heaven above me seemed new, the earth and all that was on it. All nature appeared so beautiful to me. The torment that was in my soul was gone. The fear of hell had vanished away, and the peaceful hope of Heaven succeeded to it. That was indeed the first really happy day in my life. It was to me the beginning of days and years. I laid me down in peace that night, feeling secure and safe. I could then understand the feelings of the Psalmist as he himself expressed them. "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident," Psalm 27:3. This blessed portion of the word of God came into my mind after I had laid my head upon my pillow. Next morning I awoke in joy and peace. The fear of death had also gone away from me. Before,

when under conviction for sin, the trees seemed ready to fall on me and kill me. I used to be afraid when passing under the limbs of large trees that a limb might fall down on me, in judgment for my sin, and kill me and send me to hell. Thunder and lightning also I feared as angry messengers from God that could instantly destroy my body and send me to the place of torment. All such fears were now gone. The whole world around me was at peace with me. Feelings of pardon and peace were then my first feelings. It was the second night after the New Birth had taken place, so far as I now remember—and my memory is quite good on these things after more than twenty-one years have elapsed—my soul was filled with the love of God. Oh! such love, an unspeakable love! My soul was filled with love and light. I loved every one on earth, friend or foe. If enemies would cut me to pieces with their swords, I could still love them and pray for them. I was thinking that those pleasant feelings would continue unabated forever. But in a few days there was a decline in my joyful feelings. Things did not last thus. I have been finding out since that I must live by faith, not by feelings. Since the happy change has taken place, however, I have not been as I was previously. My blessed Saviour has never forsaken me. True, I have had my dark days, but also my bright days. He has indeed hidden from me His countenance for my foolishness, and I cried to Him in my pain and made supplication unto my God, and He in mercy heard me and delivered me from all my distresses, and lifted up upon me the light of His countenance. I have had my days of darkness, but not long. I have felt the hardness and the uncleanness, and the wickedness of my own heart; but then I have had my refreshings and my joys, my sunshines and showers, my lights and shadows. But still I am travelling on through the wilderness of this world, Zion-ward, looking unto Jesus. I have not yet fallen from grace; nor do I believe that I will. Well, well, according to your faith be it unto you.

But some one will say, do you want all others to have the same experience as you? No, I say; for I have known some good and holy men, who could not tell the day of their spiritual birth. But I insist that all Christians must be separate and distinct from the world; that they must lead pure and holy lives, lives consistent with their profession. "By their fruits ye shall know them; for every tree is known by its fruit. Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit," Matt. 7: 16, 17, 18. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. A man's life shows what he is. The Christian must be sincere, honest, truthful, loving, holy, etc. And although he is not perfect in any of those graces, yet they must be there, and increase. The Christian grows in all graces.

BLESSEDNESS OF THE RENEWED MAN.

1. I will now endeavor to show the blessedness of the *renewed man*. He has been born again—born of the water and the Spirit. He is a spiritual man; and as a spiritual man he understands spiritual things:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

"But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." 1 Cor. 2:14, 15, 16.

The miserable state of the natural man is given in verse 14. He receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. Why? Because they are foolishness to him. Nor can he understand the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned; and he is not a spiritual man. The spiritual man, on the other hand, understands spiritual things. He has already received the Holy Spirit into his own heart. He is able to understand the mind of the Lord, because the spirit of the Lord is in him. "We have," says the Apostle, "the mind of Christ." This is, indeed, one of the great blessings of the renewed man. He has in him the understanding mind that is in Christ. He has received the Holy Spirit, and "this Spirit is in Him a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life," John 4:14. The spiritual man understands the will of the Lord, and is enabled by the grace of God to do the will of God. Without knowledge of God, no one can do His will. The spiritual man is able to compare spiritual things with spiritual. This is one of the many blessings of the spiritual man. He is also led of the Spirit of the Lord.

2. The renewed man, as the word shows, is a new man.

"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" Col. 3:10.

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Eph. 4:24.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new, 2 Cor. 5:17.

The new man then is entirely different from what he formerly was. He has different feelings from what he once had; he has different thoughts and opinions about the world, about men, about God. There are new powers at work in his heart, moving his whole life in a different direction to that in which it was formerly running. His aims are now different altogether. He now loves to do good, not to gain praise for himself, but to please God. His heart is now tender; formerly it was

hard and unsympathizing; now it is loving and tender. He loves to do good to all who need his help. He loves to help the poor and needy. He feels for the sick and sorrowing. He wants to lead sinners to Christ, that they may be saved, and that they may be happy in time and eternity. He loves to make others happy like himself. This is part of the blessedness of the renewed man. Formerly he did some charitable thing for his own praise, and that people might think him good; but did nothing from proper motives, as love to God and men. Before he was renewed his own advantages were uppermost in his mind. His knowledge is now different from what it once was. His knowledge of himself, others, and of God are entirely different. He beholds himself now the chief of sinners; thinks others better than himself, and God perfectly holy. He has now different ways of speaking, acting, and thinking.

3. The renewed man is at peace with God. He was once at enmity with God. He disliked God's ways and doings, and God Himself personally. Of course, men will not always avow this, but the bolder and more hardened sinners will. Though others will not say this much, they have it in their heart all the same. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," Roms. 8:7.

"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God," Roms. 8:8. The very spirit of the carnal man is opposed to the Spirit of God. The renewed man is altogether different from this state of feeling. He is pleased with God's ways and doings, and with God personally. He loves Him and obeys Him. There is mutual love between God and the new man. They agree. God loves him and he loves God. They agree; hence there is peace between them. There is a good feeling towards one another. Peace has the meaning of quietness and agreeableness, a pleasant sensation or feeling of love and joy. The new man can think with pleasure of God; he can consider Him with comfort to himself. He has confidence in God's goodness and kindness towards him, and loves to think of him. Peace with God is a very sweet feeling of the soul. It is one of the things that make the Christian happy. The new man knows that God is pleased with him, and he is pleased with God. No differences exist between them. They have been reconciled the one to the other. The very best of feeling exists between them; hence the new man feels happy and secure. His security is of a pleasing and happy nature. This peace the world cannot take away, although it can injure it a little at times. "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Roms. 5:1.

4. The renewed man has passed from death unto life. He was once dead in trespasses and sins. He was once careless and unconcerned

about his own soul, the good of others, and God's glory. The dead are unconcerned and pleased as they are; they know no better; they feel not death. Though they dwell in darkness, they seek not the light. The graceless man is spiritually dead. He is ignorant of God and His ways. But the renewed man has left that miserable state. He has passed unto life; and that life is not only of a blessed and peaceful nature, but is also eternal. (John 3:15:16). He has, through that life, power to obey God. Before he could not obey God; but now he can obey Him and keep His commandments. He is now spiritually alive; His soul was once dead, but is now alive; alive to God's requirements. Life shows itself in actions, feelings and needs. The living, the spiritually minded, alone act on God's commands, have pleasure in doing the will of God. To do His will is their delight. Before they had no pleasure in doing the will of God, but an aversion to it; a feeling of dislike to obey Him. They have now a sense of the needs of the soul, and are able to apply to God for help. They know where to go for help. This spiritual life, to which they have passed, they will spend in God's service. All His people serve Him; the very humblest of them are engaged in His service. They have times and seasons to give to God. They will not give all their time and talent to the world. True, they are, many of them, engaged in manual labor, busy from morning to night to earn bread for themselves and their children, but they are, even when thus engaged, praising God. Their tongues can praise Him when their hands are employed at their work. Their thoughts can be on Heavenly things when at their daily labors. Our business will not excuse us from serving the Lord. "The living praise God," Isa. 38:19.

5. The *renewed man has communion with God*. This is one of his greatest blessings. We cannot have communion with anyone unless we are acquainted with him. There is then an acquaintance between the believer and God. He knows His own people and they know Him. Christ is always with them, as He himself said: "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," Matt. 28:20. Christ is then always with His people. He never leaves them nor forsakes them. The Lord and His people are not strangers to one another. He knows their ways, their thoughts, and doings:

"O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me.

"Thou hast known my down-sitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off.

"Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.

"For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether," Psa. 139:1, 2, 3, 4.

God exercises an all-seeing providence over man. He knows all man's ways, and is minutely acquainted with him. He knows His own

also in the way of mercy and salvation. He has saved them. They walk with Him by a holy life and conversation. There is loving affection between them. He loves their society and they love His. They agree. Unless we can agree with one we cannot keep up fellowship with him. The Apostle says: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His son Jesus Christ," 1 John 1:3.

Christians have fellowship with God the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, and with one another. This is, indeed, a blessed communion. How glorious it is that poor men and women can have this blessed comfort, and they do have it here. See also what is said of this in Genesis: "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him," Gen. 5:24. This walk was of a spiritual nature. It was a holy and loving *communion*, of which the graceless know nothing. This communion is of the nature of relationship and love. The Son is the renewed man's elder brother, and God is His Father in Christ; hence there is love and fellowship. Those that love one another are glad of one another's society; they meet in love, clasp hands, embrace, and kiss one another, and look into each other's countenances, and their spirits, as it were, flow together. There is affection between them. Hear what the Psalmist says: "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way," Psal. 2:12.

The renewed man and Christ are of the same spirit. We must receive Christ affectionately, if we receive Him at all. There must be communion here on earth between Christ and His people. This loving friendship and acquaintance ends in their being received into glory. They will not remain always here. But this is one thing that I want to say on this communion; it is one of the great comforts of believers going through the weary wilderness of this world. It cheers and helps them to bear the burdens and troubles of this life. They can tell their sufferings to their God, and ask His help. His blessed presence can help them in their darkest hour and in their greatest affliction while here. They are gladdened and comforted by this holy, Heavenly, and sweet fellowship at all times.

6. God is the defence of the renewed man. This is another of His blessings. God is not the defence of the wicked; but He is the defence of His own people: "Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing; for God is my *defence*, and the God of my mercy," Psal. 59:17.

God then is the defence of the renewed man, as we see in this Psalm. He is all-powerful; able to defend from all enemies. No enemy can prevail against the godly; for none can be able to prevail against God and overcome Him. This is very comforting to the Christian going

through the dangerous wilderness of this world. He can in all his dangers raise up his soul to God and plead to Him for help. "The shields of the earth belong unto God." All power in heaven and earth are in Christ's hands. God is their protection by day and night. "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night," *Psa. 121:6*. God is the defence of His people at all times, even unto death. See also what is said with reference to this in another place: "The Lord is my shepherd," *Psa. 23:1*. The Lord will protect His people here as a shepherd protects his sheep from all dangers. The shepherd is appointed for that purpose, so Christ is appointed to guard His own people. He is their shepherd in this life. There is a further promise in the same Psalm: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Not only will Christ be with His people in the present evil world, but he will be with them in the valley of the shadow of death. He will be their light, their strength, and their comfort. He has gone through life and death for His people. He has, for them, overcome the world and taken the sting out of death. He has promised to be with them in this world and in death. He is a very present help in times of trouble and danger. Nothing can hurt them when He is with them. "Halleluia! what a Saviour."

7. *The renewed man lives a life of faith.* Great are the blessings of those who live a life of faith: "The just shall live by faith," *Gal. 3:11*. How great the blessing is of those who live by faith! They, and they only, live to God's glory. Whatever is not of faith cannot glorify God, "for whatsoever is not of faith is sin," *Roma. 14:23*. A great deal is done, and by very many, without faith. This is but adding sin to sin. Without faith it is impossible to please God. The graceless have no faith, and cannot do anything by it, and so cannot do anything pleasing to God. The godly do all their works by faith. "Their faith worketh by love," *Gal. 5:6*. This is genuine faith. Love is connected therewith. Love and faith together are beautiful. Faith looks to Jesus as its author and finisher. God accepts the works of faith only. A great blessing for the renewed is that God accepts their works of faith and love. Our works will be of no benefit to us unless God accepts them. He will not accept the works of the unpardoned sinner; hence many will be greatly disappointed at the last great day. See *Matt. 7:22, 23*.

That God accepts the works of the renewed is a source of comfort and happiness to them. Then, again, they are able to cast their cares upon God, as He has Himself commanded them. "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." *1 Peter 5:7*. How blessed it is, indeed, to be able to cast our cares upon God, upon Him who careth for us, and is able and willing to take care of us. The unrenewed are

not by any means able to cast their cares and burdens upon the Lord. They must bear them themselves. And what a terrible load they must bear? But the renewed, who alone are God's children, can by His own grace cast their cares upon Him, and can then go with a light heart through the world. Man mars much of that happiness he might enjoy by persisting in bearing the cares of this life. I mean here unnecessary cares that man cannot help. Cursing cares and worries about many things, and some of those in the far future even. The renewed man can cast all his cares upon the Lord, and the Lord takes them and bears them Himself; so that His people can travel through the world with cheerfulness and gladness.

8. The renewed man has an inheritance in Heaven. Not only has he blessings going through this life below, and help and comfort even in death, but he has a glorious place awaiting him in Heaven. This is no fancy sketch, but a blessed reality: "I go to prepare a place for you," John 14:2. "That where I am, there ye may be also," John 14:3. Christ has entered Heaven in our name and on our behalf. We are joint heirs with Him. The renewed man is an heir of God Himself. This is what the Apostle says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you," 1 Peter, 1:3, 4. This glorious inheritance, that lasts forever, is reserved for those who will be found prepared for it at last. This is one of the great blessings of the renewed ones. This world will not last; and a blissful, eternal dwelling place is kept in Heaven for them. They will get this rich and incorruptible inheritance when they leave this sinful world. Indeed all the blessed promises in the word of God are for the renewed ones; those born again.

"For him the kingdom of the just afar doth glorious shine,
And he the King of Kings shall see in majesty divine."

AN APPEAL TO THE UNSAVED.

The unpardoned sinner is in great danger every minute of his life. God is angry with him: "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day," Psalms 7:11. Every unpardoned sinner is going on and increasing in wickedness every day. He is adding sin to sin. Every unbeliever is an unpardoned sinner, and as such the enemy of God. Every unbelieving sinner is also a condemned man: "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is con-

demned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God," John 3:18.

By unbelief man is condemned in the present time; he has not to wait till death; he is under condemnation just now. He is, besides, under the wrath of God: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John 3:36. The unbelieving sinner is condemned already and under the wrath of God. The Lord may enter into judgment with His enemies any time, take away their portion out of this life, and banish them forever to that place where mercy is unknown, that lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, where all the unbelieving will at last find their home. There is no way possible of giving a greater insult to God than rejecting the salvation He has provided in His Son; there is nothing else that angers Him so much. God has said that He would be revenged upon His enemies: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord," Romans 12:19. We see from the foregoing passages that God is determined to punish sin. Every transgression and disobedience will receive from Him a "just recompense of reward." He will reward every sin, and give every sinner according to his works: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works," Matt. 16:27.

"Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and that will by no means clear the guilty," Ex. 34:7.

The Scriptures abundantly show that God will punish sin, that He will reward every transgression and disobedience, and that He will give to every one according to his work; that He will by no means clear the guilty. He will punish the guilty. Justice is one of the qualities of the Divine nature, and must be satisfied. All who are expecting to escape the justice of God on the ground of His mercy will be mistaken at last. They may now flatter themselves with hopes. But the day is coming when vain hopes and delusions will fade away from men. God will put His threats into force upon His enemies. All He has said He will certainly fulfil. He has spoken nothing in vain. God will be found true and every man that contradicts Him will be found a liar. The day of judgment will be found a day of great realities. God will not change anything He has said. He cannot do so for He is a God that cannot lie, and that cannot change. We must either take Him at His word, or reject Him and His word altogether.

Let us also consider for a little what He has said concerning future punishment:

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God," Psa. 9:17.

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.

The rich man died and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

"And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame," Luke 16:19, 22, 23, 24, etc.

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever," Rev. 20:10.

We learn from the foregoing that there is a place of future punishment, where the devil and all the wicked shall be tormented for ever and ever. All unbelievers will have their abode in that terrible place. Mark 16:16; Luke 12:46.

From the texts given above under this head, we learn three things. First, that God will be revenged upon the unpardoned sinner; second, that there is a terrible place of punishment, a lake that burns with fire and brimstone; third, that in this awful place the unbelieving will suffer for ever and ever.

Friend, where will you be spending eternity? Are you on the way to that terrible place? If you remain in unbelief, you will certainly end in that place of torments. Think seriously and earnestly, beloved friend, where you are going! "Broad is the way that leads to destruction," and many are travelling on it. It is an easy matter to be lost. Man has only to continue in his sins. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Hebs. 2:3.

If we only neglect the salvation, we perish eternally! There is an opinion with some that in order to be lost, a man must be a great criminal, a murderer, a thief, or a blackguard. Such is not the case. You may be moral, kind and decent and yet be lost. Every one that will continue a stranger to the New Birth, will perish. Hear what the word of God says with reference to this matter: "And if thy hand offend out it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," Mark 9:43, 44, etc. Now, in hell there are torments for ever and ever. The worm dieth not; that is the man, who is a worm, who is of the dust as to his body. Body and soul shall be united on the resurrection day and they shall continue together during the ages of eternity. Though the suffering ones should desire death there, it will flee away from them. Oh! it is so hot there! It would be most painful to be chained to a stake between two fires in this world, and kept without a drop of water to cool the

tongue of the victim. We pity even an animal panting for the water brooks and finding none. But what will it be to live in fire? Oh, think of it, friend! To live in a lake of fire and brimstone. How suffocating it will be! How dry and hot your inward parts will be! How hot your tongue will be! The rich man, who represents the lost in hell, prayed for a few drops of water, but was denied even one drop. It could not be given to him. The days of his good things were past. He had received his good things in his life time. In his life time he fared well, lived sumptuously. He wore the robes of royalty even—"purple and fine linen." He had a fine house, a rich table and beautiful garments; all luxuries. But that all passed away with using; they will do him no good in eternity, but rather torment him when thinking of them. He denied Christ a place in his heart when he lived; he revelled in luxury and sin; was unmerciful to the poor. Now his unclean tongue is burning in unquenchable flames. Thirst is no doubt one of the terrible torments of hell. Christ when bearing the sins of His people on the cross, said: "I thirst." The flesh of the wicked will suffer pain and heat; for they sinned through the body, and must suffer in the same body. The body will not waste away there, either. But will be rather like heated steel that will not melt away; but last forever. The wicked will also suffer in their souls as well as in their bodies. If you think, my friend, that this description of hell is over-drawn, I must tell you kindly and sincerely that it is far short of what the place is. Think, for instance, on the companions—Satan himself, and devils, who will make fun of all your sufferings, and offer you draughts of hell liquid fire to drink in your raging thirst, and laugh at you. If men on earth were so wicked as to offer Christ on the cross sour vinegar to drink, what will not devils do to *you*? Ah! young man I speak earnestly to you, lest you should persevere in your sins and go there. You may continue now in your sinful and careless course; but a day of reckoning is coming. A few days of sickness may lay you in the dust, or one casualty, what men commonly call an accident, may launch you into eternity; the running away of your horse, or the upsetting of your carriage, may do it. Of what benefit will it then be to you that you enjoyed the sinful society of men? Of what benefit will it be to you, young woman, that you try to outshine others, despise the godly, and go on in the giddy and foolish ways of the world? You are going on in the ways of the world. All who follow these ways resemble a person dancing on the edge of a yawning precipice, or leaping and dancing upon thin layers of ice on the top of a great glacier, such as is found among the Alps, and where beneath one are vast pits and sharp rocks, some thousands of feet down. You have only to miss one step and down you will go, and your body will be mangled upon the rocks. Your danger is a little illustrated thus. You are in danger of losing

your soul. Life is short and uncertain. We have no promise of one day. Death has all times for itself; death is always ready. A thousand gates are open to the grave. There are a thousand ways and more in which death may come to us any time. Here we have no continuing city. Our days are as the grass, and we are but as the morning flower. The grass is cut down and the flowers wither away. So we fade away from this world. Again, my friend, what shall the world profit us if we should gain it all, and lose our own souls? The pleasures of sin last only for a season. The feast has its feverish hour of mirth, and then its pleasures are over. The pleasures of the world are neither satisfying nor lasting. Those who live only to gain wealth and fame in this world will perish for ever and ever. The world will be the means of keeping many out of Heaven. People give their heart to it, love and worship it, and thus make it their God. Then the pleasures of sin are only for a season. There is a sort of a low, carnal pleasure in sin. I have read of a man who led a large herd of swine to the shambles by throwing them a few beans now and again. This resembles the pleasures by which Satan leads men to their ruin. He throws them a few pleasures now and again to lead them along in the sinful way. It is in this way that the great destroyer is leading many to everlasting ruin, down to the gates of everlasting destruction. He employs means to accomplish his ends; and those means are such as please the carnal mind of man. Think again, friend, and think seriously, of your eternity. How long it will be! We think a week upon a bed of sore sickness very long. But just think of an eternity of pain and anguish without any comfort whatever, not so much as a drop of cold water. When a thousand years of suffering in hell are over, it is only beginning; when one million years are past, you are no nearer its end, for it has no end. As well attempt to find the end of a ring as try to find the end of eternity; it has no end. There is a broad and an easy way, and a wide gate into hell; but there is no door or way leading out of it, none at all. There is no way of getting back from it. Once one goes there, he will remain there during the ages of eternity, with all opportunities past and gone forever.

What do you want me then to do? You say to me. Well, I want you to give up evil companions, to begin with, if you have such; and my opinion is that nearly all the graceless have evil companions. Hear what the Holy Spirit has to say with regard to it: "He that walketh with wise men will be wise; but a companion of fools will be destroyed," Prov. 13:20.

The fool in scripture language is the unbelieving sinner; the one who is going on in sin and folly. The companion of such a one will be destroyed. Evil companions have proved ruinous to a great many

young people. They lead them on to their ruin. Beware of those who would entice you to sin even once. Remember that "only once" is one of Satan's chief means for destruction. Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit only once, and think of the ruin they brought on themselves and their descendants; all the sorrow and woe and suffering that *once* brought into the world. What would you think of a person who would counsel you to let a poisonous serpent bite you "only once?" You would, of course, understand that he wanted to ruin you. Well, my friend, that is exactly what any one who counsels you to sin once does. One sinful act may blast your fair character and ruin you in this world, at least; and, perhaps, for the eternal world.

I want you to give up all your sinful ways. There is a promise of mercy and forgiveness to all who will do so. This is what the Lord says: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteousness man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon," Isa. 55:7. Here is an abundant promise of mercy and pardon to all who will forsake the evil ways of sin. Man can do this; for many a sinner has done so. Man can make a reformation; but too many of those that made a reformation have remained contented with reformation. They stayed there; not all of them, indeed, but, alas! too many of them. They concluded that reformation was all that was needed.

But some will say if I am not elected, I will not be saved. Election and salvation are two different things. What you can get is salvation, and that salvation is to be had in Christ. Get the salvation, friend, and your election is sure. You will then find out that election and all other blessings are yours. Hear what Christ Himself said on this point: "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," John 5:40. Christ has life to give to all who will come to Him. The trouble is they will not come to Christ. He has never refused to give life to any that applied to Him for it. He never will refuse to save the returning and penitent sinner

Then, again, He said in another place: "He that seeketh findeth," Matt. 7:8.

Coming to Christ and seeking salvation from Him are the conditions on which salvation is given, and not election and predestination.

Not only is it necessary to return from the evil ways and companions, but you must go to Christ for salvation. He is willing to save even the chief of sinners. He is honored in the salvation of the greatest sinner who returns to Him. Salvation is not a thing He gives unwillingly, but with the greatest pleasure. Christ is glorified in the salvation of sinners. They will be the vessels of God's glory in eternity. They will manifest forth His glory, and shine in His Heavenly

kingdom as the sun for ever and ever. There is joy in Heaven when sinners are born again on earth. The glorious work of salvation on earth is not unobserved in Heaven. There is rejoicing in Heaven at every addition to the kingdom of God in this world. The Son of God is now seated on a throne of mercy to receive sinners and pardon sin, and grant mercy and repentance to such as will apply to Him. One great encouragement is that he never turned any away that came to Him. He is delighted to receive and pardon sinners. Mercy is not a thing he tardily and reluctantly extends to sinners, but that which He bestows willingly and graciously. "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." His office is to forgive and pardon and bless. Some of the greatest sinners have been forgiven; among those were Manassah, the bloody king, who filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; Saul of Tarsus, who desolated the Christian Church with bloody persecution; among them were also Mary Magdalene, out of whom He cast seven devils; Rahab; and the woman of Samaria, who had five or six husbands; and the thief on the cross. The greatest sinner that ever applied to Christ has been pardoned. Hence the greatest sinner has the very best of encouragement to go to Christ for salvation.

Then, I wish you to go because you will be so happy when you get Christ for your Saviour. He is such a glorious Saviour, so full of love, goodness, and mercy. He will make you so unspeakably happy. The happiness and the blessedness that are in Christ baffles description. No one can fully declare them; and however well told you cannot understand them till you get them for yourself. These spiritual blessings and joys are only properly understood by getting possession of them. You must have them for yourself, and then you will understand them; otherwise you will never understand them. It is most blessed, indeed, to have Christ for your Saviour and your elder brother, God the Father for your father, and the Holy Spirit for your comforter. Great are the blessings of God's children in this world, though they may have troubles in the world itself. They have also joys and blessings. They have the first fruits of the Spirit, and blessed peace with God. Besides all this a happy and glorious eternity awaits those who believe. There is a glorious place prepared for them. I would like you, friend, not to miss that glorious place, where there is no pain, sorrow, crying, nor hunger and thirst, nor any such things. Neither is there any sorrow, but joy forever more. The Lamb is the light of it. He is the sun of righteousness that shines in that glorious kingdom. You will forget all your sorrows and sufferings there. There will be no night there, and they need no candle nor the light of the sun. There the tree of life is continually blooming; there the river of life flows forever and ever; there the saved drink from the flowing fountain of eternal delights.

The perfection of all beauty is there; the perfection of happiness is there. Nothing that ministers to joy, comfort, and happiness is wanting there. It is a perfectly happy and glorious place. Do not miss it, friend. It is such a glorious place. Its joys never know decrease, but go on ever increasing; they never end, for they are infinite; they have no end.

Then, again, you will be with loved and loving friends forever and ever. The companionship of the glorified in Heaven will be so good that you will never weary of it. There are bright angels, also, with whom you may commune, and with whom you may associate; and, above all, Jesus Christ your Saviour, who died for you and redeemed you. He will be your chief joy there. You will behold His face and rejoice in Him continually. Nothing will ever disturb your calm peace and joy in Heaven; you will never be moved in your thoughts and affections from Christ; it will be with you a calm study, and peaceful enjoyment without interruption and without end. I want you, my friend, not to lose Heaven, whatever else you will lose. Take Christ now for your Saviour, and all will be well. You go to Him for salvation, and you will get it. Let not Satan, the world, and the flesh keep you out of Heaven. I can but imperfectly describe its bliss and beauty; but go and see it for yourself, and possess the fair land of glory.

There's a beautiful land beyond compare,
And sorrow and trouble never go there;
Jesus is king of that glorious place
Where angels and saints forever rejoice.

Besides all those considerations your soul is so very precious. It is more valuable than all the precious gems in this world. The gold of the Indies is nothing in comparison to it. It is so precious that Christ laid down his life to save it; He shed His precious blood to cleanse it from sin and make it fit for Heaven. The soul is the throne of God in this world. It is there the Holy Spirit resides and pours forth His glorious light, and puts forth His glorious power. Then, again, the soul is immortal. It will continue to live on forever and ever whether in bliss or misery. The souls of the righteous will enjoy great happiness in glory, and will manifest forth an inconceivable beauty. The righteous will shine with Heavenly splendor in the kingdom of their Father. Their beauty and glory and joy shall never diminish, but go on still increasing in that glorious place, where they will forever sing the song of the redeemed: "To Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood," etc.

MARKS OF THE NEW BIRTH.

Whilst giving under this head a few of the marks of the New Birth, I find it necessary also to give some of the marks of the false professor or hypocrite. I place the true and the false together, that the difference between them may be plainly seen. It is, indeed, like placing light and darkness side by side.

1. He who has been born again hates sin. This hatred is also deep in his heart. He dreads the wickedness and the filthiness of sin. He hates it with a perfect hatred. This arises from his having the Spirit of Christ in him. Where the Spirit of Christ is not, sin is not hated. Another proof of this hatred of sin is that the new man loves God and His law sincerely, which he is unable to do if he loves sin. The love of God and the love of sin cannot dwell together. When the Christian sins he does so contrary to his will. It is the sin that is in him that does it, as the Apostle says: "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me," Roms. 7:20. The false professor may talk a great deal about sin and against sin; but he loves it at the same time. He never truly hated sin. His heart is still in it. He resembles Lot's wife coming out of Sodom; she could not keep from looking back. Her heart was there. "Where a man's treasure is, there will his heart be also."

2. He who is born of the water and of the Spirit bridles his *tongue*. There is no human power that can bridle the tongue and conquer it;—"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain," Jas. 1:26. So long as the tongue is not bridled, there is no grace. A bitter and a false tongue goes always along with a graceless heart. Grace, and grace alone, is able to conquer the tongue.

3. He is seeking things above. He is not contented with the best things on earth. His thoughts and desires are higher than this world. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth," Col. 3:1, 2. Now every one that is risen with Christ into spiritual life is seeking things above; that is spiritual things, things of the Spirit of God, as holiness, love, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost, faith, etc., and Heavenly communion with the Father and the Son. Every good and perfect gift cometh down from God. He has received the gift of the Holy Spirit, and that Spirit soars upwards to Heaven. The holy man's affections are set already on things above; hence his conversation is Heavenly. His mind is Heavenly. The affections of earthly men are set upon earthly things.

They love this present world. They have given their heart to it; and would like to stay in it. Their talk is continually of it. Their conversation is earthly. The whole drift of their mind is on earthly things.

4. *The true Christian loves good and holy men.* He is a lover of good men. The world loves its own men, but the Godly love goodly men. Just as sure as you love God Himself, you love the godly man. It is the same Spirit that loves the godly man and God: "And every one that loveth Him that begot loveth Him also that is begotten of Him," 1 Jno. 5:1. This then is a true mark of the renewed man. He loves those who are like himself walking the narrow way, who are endeavoring to do good and live holy. Every good person is a lover of good men. To love good men comes easily to him. He himself is of a kindred spirit with them. It is impossible to love God whom we have not seen, unless we love our brother, whom we have seen. Love to the brethren is an unfailing proof of the New Birth.

5. *He wants spiritual instruction.* Every preacher and every preaching will not satisfy the spiritual man. He wants spiritual preaching. Christ must be in the sermon or it will not please him. He himself is a spiritual man, and he really needs spiritual instruction. It is not a fancy with him, but a necessity. He requires that which is spiritual in the worship of God. If this element is wanting in the sermon, he will not be pleased or edified, however excellent the discourse may be in other respects. "Well composed and well delivered" will not satisfy his wants. He wants Christ. What the graceless man seeks in the sermon is botany, astronomy, history, rhetoric, eloquence, etc. He wants fine composition, well rounded periods, fluency of speech. He loves anecdotes about the heavenly bodies, about beautiful flowers and rare plants, and much history, and then a short sermon. A short, lively, pleasing, Christless sermon will do him. He does not want the spiritual.

6. *Humility is another mark of the New Birth.* No man is a child of God who is not humble. Humility is one of the distinctive marks of the godly. Hear what Christ said: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of Heaven," Matt. 18:3, 4. The believer must be humble as a little child. The little child has no pride whatever in him. He does not despise the poor and the sick. He does not think himself above others in any respect. He is not envious of the success of others. The graceless are proud and envious. They envy those who get on better than themselves, and would like to pull them down again. They are full of religious conceit. They are proud of their profession. Indeed they sometimes make their profession, that people may hear

about it. They love to hear what people will be saying in their praise. They love the praise of men and the honor of men. Gracious souls will not do this. Though they have failings, yet they are not ruled by the remainders of sin that are still in them. It is not proud of their profession they are, but often afraid that they made a false profession. This gives them much concern at times. Let us hear what the Holy Spirit has to say with reference to them: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil," 1 Cor. 13:4, 5. In these verses we have some very distinctive marks of the *new man*. He is not seeking his own advantages. He is not quarrelsome and cross grained. He is not suspicious and dark. The scribes and Pharisees were envious and covetous; they desired the highest seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts. The Pharisees of our day are possessed of the same spirit. They must have the highest places in the church, or they will not do anything. The sin is not so much in desiring a place in the church as in desiring it when there is no fitness for it. If God's people desire a place, as they sometimes do, it is to do good and to be useful, and not to get praise.

7. *He is a holy man.* Without holiness no man can see the Lord; no man can be pleasing to God unless he is holy. No man is a renewed man who is not serious and correct in his deportment. It is quite necessary that a Christian should be a serious person. Those who are as light and flippant as ever they were, are not holy men. Many professors lack this grace, and with it lack all the other graces. The light and the frivolous are not yet in Christ. There is no such a thing as a giddy Christian.

8. The experience of the renewed soul are fully and beautifully described by the psalmist:

"I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

"He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my foot upon a rock, and established my goings.

"And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God," Ps. 40: 1, 2, 3.

First, he was in trouble for his soul; he was convicted of sin. The conviction was thorough. He felt that he was in a horrible pit. Sin made the pit dreadful for him. He was sinking down in despair almost. The Lord heard and delivered him. He took him out of all his trouble. He set his feet upon a rock; he now trusts in Christ; and is strengthened and settled. Then He put a new song in my mouth. This is a song the world knows not; the song of redeeming love. It is new; he did not know it before. Formerly he had the old song of the world. This new song is a song of praise to God. His praises will now

be given to God. He knows that God did all for him, and that he himself did nothing.

9. *The Renewed man is a man of Faith.* Often he thinks that he has no faith; but yet he shows that he has faith. In all his troubles and perplexities, he turns to the Lord for help. In the darkest day, his heart is more towards Christ than towards any man. He trusts more in Him than in an arm of flesh: "And the life which I would live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me," Gal. 2:20. Every believer lives really a life of faith, whether his faith be great or little. That he has faith, he shows in his life. It may be little indeed, yet it is there. He can and does commit himself, his family, and all his affairs to the Lord; and depends upon the Lord for safety and help.

10. *The Renewed man is poor and needy.* He is not always strong; he is not always happy; he has his dark days as well as his bright ones. For proof we turn again to the Psalms: "But I am poor and needy," Ps. 40:17. The Christian is one who feels his own poverty. He feels his own imperfections; his own short coming. His own righteousness is become as filthy rags in his sight. The hardness and the coldness of his heart, he laments. He feels the need of the cleaning power. No one needs to tell him that his heart is not pure. He would like to be perfect, but he finds that he is a sinner, a great sinner. He both thinks and feels that there is no sinner like himself. This was also Paul's experience when he said: "Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:24.

Paul felt that he was wretched on account of the law of sin, which he found in his members. He found the remains of sin in him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him. This state of feeling keeps the Christian humble and prayerful. Christ said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven," Matt. 5:3. That a man is poor and needy in spirit, is a good proof that he has been born again. Many more proofs might be given. But, friend, if you can lay claims to the foregoing, you can CERTAINLY to all the other in the word of God.

I will give you an illustration of the graceless heart, and of the renewed heart as follows:—

There was said to be some debatable lands, in ancient times, between England and Ireland; and to ascertain to which kingdom they belonged they had recourse to a test. They threw reptiles upon the land; and if the reptiles lived, the lands belonged to England, and if they died, the lands belonged to Ireland.

This fable fittingly illustrates the graceless heart and the renewed heart. Satan can throw evil thoughts into both; he can tempt the

righteous and the wicked. If those evil thoughts live and thrive in your soul, you are not born again. If you cherish and indulge unclean and revengeful thoughts in your heart, you are still graceless. In the renewed soul the unclean and the evil thought have no dwelling place. Satan can throw them into the heart, but they cannot live there. The Holy Spirit, who dwells there, will destroy them. They cannot thrive and grow where grace is. The power of grace will destroy them. Compare your own heart to this and learn if you are *born again*.

CONCLUSION.

The New Birth is the door of salvation. None can be saved without it. No one enters Heaven, young or old, except he is born again. Then the New Birth is not easily accomplished. The unrenewed heart is hardened against God, and full of uncleanness and wickedness. Satan himself has possession of it, and is determined to keep his possession. Man is not able to change his own heart, even if he should try. Still worse, he resists the Holy Spirit, and opposes with all his might the blessed work of the Spirit in his own heart. The Holy Spirit alone is able to renew the soul of man. Again, man will be miserable forever unless his heart be changed by the grace of God. He is condemned already, and except he be pardoned, he will ere long open his eyes in hell, and remain there during the ages of eternity. His great need then is a new heart and a right spirit. Jesus Christ died that this glorious change might be effected.

As a natural man you cannot understand spiritual things. Great is the misery of ignorance of God. You cannot see the kingdom of God. You cannot know the blessings of it nor understand its nature. Then you cannot enter into it. The entrance into the spiritual kingdom of God must take place here or not at all. By an entrance into it you become a member of that spiritual kingdom He has in this world, and a sharer of the manifold blessings which the Lord bestows upon His people in this life, and become prepared for His Heavenly kingdom above. If man misses the necessary preparation for Heaven, he must forever remain outside of it. The blessed salvation that can be accomplished in time, cannot at all be effected in eternity. To be a stranger to the New Birth is to be a stranger to Christ, and to be a stranger to Christ is to be a stranger to God the Father and to Heaven.

The Holy Spirit, let us remember, is the person who effects this wonderful and blessed change. He begins by producing conviction of sin in the heart. But the spirit does not work without the word of God. The sinners must hear the word as Nicodemus did from Christ. The sinner is then led to seek salvation. He finds the load of sin and guilt a terrible one. In your distress take good care lest you go to the grace-

less for help and instruction. But if you go to those who have been born again themselves, they will help you, and lead you in the right way. The help of those who have experienced a work of grace will be of much use to you, indeed. But, as I have already said, beware of going to those who do not understand spiritual things, who are strangers to the work of the Spirit, and who are only false professors. They cannot instruct you, but will be sure to lead you astray, if you will listen to them. They will heal your wounds lightly, crying, "Peace. peace, when there is no peace," Jer. 6:14. They will endeavor to soothe you and quiet down your fears, and rock you again to sleep in carnal security. Cold, carnal professors have healed many in this way, and have been the means of their ruin. Such professors of religion are but blind guides of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch, (Matt. 15:14). Now, if you will apply to those blind guides, whatever their standing may be in the church, even if ministers, you will be apt to get damage by them; for they will be likely to try to do something for you in the way of helping you, and will be sure to do the wrong thing.

Above all, you must go to Jesus Christ. He will give you the best instruction. There is none like Him. But some one will say, how can I go to Him now? He is in Heaven. You can go to Him now in prayer and supplication. You will not have to travel as far as Nicodemus had. He is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to grant repentance to Israel and remission of sins. He that will go to Him, He will in nowise cast you out (Jno. 6:37). He gladly receives all who come to Him seeking salvation, and willingly grants their request. It is His delight to do so. He has never yet refused, and never will refuse, any one who comes to Him sincerely seeking mercy. Nicodemus did three things wisely and well.

First, he went to Jesus (Jno. 3:2) And he got salvation, whether at the time he was present with Him or shortly afterwards, we will not say. His salvation, however, followed his interview with Christ. Whatever his motives were in going to Jesus, let your motive be to get salvation! You must go to Jesus, friend, if you would be saved. Second, he spoke for Jesus in the council, (Jno. 7:50, 51) and that in the face of danger, for the council was bitterly opposed to our Saviour, and was bent on his destruction.

Third, he concerned himself about Jesus; he was present at His burial, with Joseph Arimathea; he went expenses about the burial (Jno. 19:39). This all who are saved by Christ must do. They must speak for Him, even in the face of shame and danger; they will be willing to give some of their time and money to advance His cause in the world.

Beware of stopping at a reformation. Many reformed, but they miserably remained there, and were lost. Reformation is good and necessary and beautiful; but it is not regeneration. You can never enter Heaven trusting in your own good behaviour and morality. Again, take care lest you be satisfied with impressions, and remain in ignorance of a saving change. Some have had impressions and went no further. Impressions, though they may have been deep, will not do. They are, indeed, a good beginning. But if you will go no further, they will, after a time, die away, and you will find at last that you were not saved, and that you were building upon the sand.

Some were even made partakers of the Holy Spirit in certain of His operations in their hearts, and were enlightened, and tasted the powers of the world to come, (Hebs. 6:4, 5, 6), and in that way came near to the kingdom of Heaven.

Then, we have the case of the young, rich ruler that would like to be saved. He came to Jesus in haste, asking what good thing he should do to inherit eternal life. (Matt. 19:16-22). Jesus loved him. He was a loveable young man, and of good behaviour; a good moral character.

Then, again, we have the case of the intelligent scribe to whom Christ said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God," Mark 12:34.

We learn from these cases that some come near the kingdom of God in feelings and enlightenment; some in good behaviour, and some in knowledge. But to come near a thing is not to have it in possession. To come near getting salvation is only to perish. It is not to seem to be something that will profit, but *to be*. Take care lest you be satisfied with seeming to be a Christian. Pretence is only a failure. Make sure then by all means of your salvation. Make sure that it was a work of grace that was done in your case, and that your soul is *renewed*. And if you ask, how? I refer you again to the marks I have already given of the New Birth. Be sure that these marks are yours, and I am not afraid to say that you are born again, even if you can only make sure of one of them. I think also that you will be sure of your salvation yourself, and that you will not be disappointed at death and in the day of judgment. First of all make sure of your salvation. This should be the great question with every one. Then show to the world by a holy and consistent life that you are a Christian. Let yours be a life of faith in the Son of God. Your good and holy life will witness to the world what you are. Let it, friend, be a careful and prayerful life. Be a close follower of Jesus. Make Him the example of your life.

Lastly, do all you can for the salvation of others. Be a working Christian. Have compassion upon the perishing, and do all you can to save them. Remember that Jesus saved you, and that their souls need salvation as much as yours did. Laboring for the good of others is the

way to put your money to the exchangers. (Matt. 25:14-30). It is the way to improve what you have received. There should be no such thing as a slothful Christian. Your grace and also your spiritual comfort will be increased by laboring for the good of others. Your work must be done out of love for Jesus and perishing souls. Then you can look forward to triumphant death and a glorious eternity. When Jesus comes again, He will reward every one according to His works. At the last great day, the day of judgment, God's servants will receive a crown of life that fadeth not away. You will then be acknowledged before men and angels, and shall hear the joyful welcome, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

